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NEW VIEWS ON OLD SUBJECTS

Social, Scientific and Political

BY

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"LIFE WITHOUT A MASTER," "NEW DISPENSATION,"
"LIVING THOUGHTS," ETC.



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PART I

PERSONAL AND PREFATORY

In this volume it has been my chief aim to keep alive what I have already presented in other works and to have my readers treasure up and remember what I have all along considered to be most valuable and serviceable truths. I have never felt inclined to argue with my readers. I am not fond of controversies—besides, I always bear in mind how difficult, and how utterly impossible in practice it is to make people see and understand what they do not wish to see and do not care to understand. I am not fond of making converts, and whether others decide to see things as I see them or do not, never gives me the slightest concern. Whether people believe or do not believe, I have always considered it to be their matter rather than mine. I have always regarded it as my prerogative to believe as I please, and why should I not be willing to grant to others the same privilege? I might remark that I have taken great

pains and I have gone to considerable expense in various ways and at different times, to return to the world the light that had been given to me; and having done this to the best of my ability, it has seemed to me that there, so far as the public is concerned, my obligations end.

Whether I shall have due credit or not for what I have said and done is a trifling matter hardly worth considering. Such things are never equitably adjusted in the affairs of this world. There is a great deal of chance, and sometimes there is artifice, in manipulating the scales when reputations are weighed. Some men get too much credit, and others not enough. However, the world goes round just as well in either case. It is some satisfaction, it may be added, to have people know what we have said, even if no thanks are rendered.

No writer is ever permitted to know at last just what impression he has made upon the public, or how far his doctrines have been accepted or followed by his readers. That is one satisfaction that is denied necessarily to all authors, simply because this fact which they would most like to know is one that is not ascertainable. It is something that cannot be measured or defined, and therefore it can never be individualized. But a writer is generally able to perceive what progress has been made, and is still being made in the world, by the doctrines which perhaps he has himself long advocated and to the study of which his whole life has been mainly devoted. And that is the very happy and consoling experience of the author of this book.

Errors of
Grammar.

In my first work, published in 1858, I took up for consideration and discussion the "Errors of Grammar."

The study of grammar at that time, a full half century ago, received some attention in schools, but when the writers themselves had such crude notions of language and its office, how could we expect the teachers and pupils in the schools of that day to make any more satisfactory progress than they did? The prevailing system followed at that time was the one found in Kirkham's Grammar, a work based mainly on Murray's Grammar, a well-known English production of that period. This was followed by Brown's Grammar, a larger and more complete work than Kirkham's, but not essentially different from it in theory and plan. The first grammar in which a new departure was taken in this country was that of Professor Clark, of Cortland, N. Y.

Kirkham's
Grammar.

According to Murray's system, adopted by Kirkham, words were treated as material things, instead of being as they really are, simply developments of thoughts and mere signs of things. The nomenclature of grammar fifty years ago, and for a long period before and after, gave striking evidence of the materialistic view of language that was accepted by the scholars and writers of that day. The words of a sentence were treated as separate and distinct individuals. They were "parsed" by the pupils of that early time—a very amusing pastime to say the least. There were objective cases and nominative cases; there were transitive

and intransitive verbs; there were indicative and subjunctive moods, and an imperative mood besides. Words were tacked or pasted upon other words, and thus we had what are called adjectives; there were interjections, or words thrown in, and conjunctions, by which words were tied or joined together.

When we come to examine the Grammatical grammars of early days, we find, in Expressions. the definitions given, such language as the following: "Nouns have three genders," when it is known that animals alone have gender, and usually there is but one gender to one animal. Again, "Person is a property that varies the verb." How does it vary the verb? Can any word, can anything be varied? "The objective case expresses the object of an action or relation." How does it express anything of the kind? Do words have any expression? "An adverb is a word used to modify the sense of a verb." But it is well known that no word can restrict or modify the meaning of another word. And still the imagination runs on, and language as absurd as this, on all subjects, is being written and published every day. Of course when people start on the basis of a wrong belief, the farther they proceed, the deeper in error they find themselves at last.

"Errors of Grammar" presented Language in language in a new light. A sentence a New Light. was treated as a simple growth, a complete whole, and words were conceived to be mere signs of ideas, as they really are. What the sentence expresses is one idea, or thought, and not

as many ideas as it happens to contain words. This conception of language was comparatively new at that time, but it is coming to be accepted very generally as the true one at the present day. However, the study of language, or of the philosophy of language, does not receive the attention that it deserves even to-day, either in Europe or America, and hence, speaking comparatively, the advancement made in this department of literature is limited. As has been so often observed, this is a commercial age, and what progress could we expect in the philosophy of language at such a time as this?

New Views
of Truth.

About the time that "Errors of Grammar" appeared, or a little earlier, an article was published in the *New York Teacher* giving the writer's views of Truth. The position which was then taken, and which is still held by him, is that truth is not eternal, but merely for the time being; that it is not general in its nature, but is largely local in its habitat; that what is truth for one people is not necessarily truth for other people living in other lands; that it is something that changes even for the same people at certain periods in their history; that truth is not something to contend over, but something to inquire into and to endeavor to understand; that truth, finally, is a matter of mere opinion and belief, and that what people think and come to believe is wholly a personal affair of

theirs, with which other people have no right to meddle in any manner or at any time. I am glad to note that this view of truth is getting to be very common among thinking and reflecting men at the present day. If we read the current literature of the day, containing our advanced thought as a nation, we shall find that there is a growing tendency to form new conceptions of truth. The belief in everlasting truth is visibly waning. The truth that intelligent people believe in nowadays is sensible truth, truth that is at the same time rational and beneficial. People now do not rely so much upon authority as they do upon their own good judgment. A new name that has developed of late has come to be applied to those who are accustomed to view truth in a new light. They are called "Pragmatists." Most of them seem to accept Max Stirner's view that "My truth is the truth"; or, in other words, what I believe and what seems good for me, is my truth.

Aurora
Borealis.

Some fifty years ago or more, my views on the true source of Northern Lights were first published. Those views attracted no great amount of attention, for the reason that people then, as they are now, were so busy with their own affairs that they had no time to consider the true origin of what is commonly known as the *Aurora Borealis*. An unfounded explanation, as often happens, would seemingly answer all purposes quite as well as one

that was based upon fact, and so, as it appears to be more convenient all around, the unfounded theory has come to be generally accepted in this instance as the true one. Not only in this case, but in all the affairs of everyday life, the easy and comfortable career of fiction is usually preferred to one that requires more labor and greater sacrifice. Fiction and falsehood comes unsolicited and it demands no effort; while to attain the exact truth implies both inquiry and exertion.

As to the Aurora in question, it has been commonly supposed to be due to electricity or magnetism—but just how or why, has never yet been satisfactorily explained. However, as it was not easy to prove such a thing true, it was also difficult to prove that it was false, and so the matter has remained unsettled down to the present moment. In the theory advanced by myself, it was assumed that the auroral display was due chiefly to light and shadows thrown upon the sky, after the sun had sunk below the horizon.

In the first place, auroras properly so-called are seen only at night, when the sun has set, or is setting, and when its light strikes the upper atmosphere, being reflected finally from the under surfaces of clouds. It will be remembered that the clouds reflect light like a mirror, and at the same time uniformly cast shadows like all opaque bodies. The Northern Lights move and maneuver like shadows, and that is clearly what they are—light and shadows combined, the sun, from which the light emanates, being at rest, and the clouds, which cast the shadows and reflect the

light, being usually in motion. These lights and shadows are observed mostly in the early evening, while the sun is not far below the horizon and there is more or less twilight. As a phenomenon, they are most striking in the Arctic regions, where the sun is never far below the horizon. This is the view of the phenomenon that I formed many years since, and I have never had the slightest reason to doubt its correctness. *It is my view still.* The phenomenon has nothing more to do with electricity and magnetism than the sun's light has ordinarily.

It will be remembered that people, very wise and very good people, really believed in witches and witchcraft for hundreds of years; indeed, they believed in some kind of sorcery till they took it into their heads to believe in something different. People as a rule pay little attention to reason—they simply take a notion, and that is all. And many people, quite intelligent people, believe in demons and sorcery still. Is it an uncommon thing for truth to make slow progress in this world? Is it really any wonder that people generally fall back upon electricity and magnetism, of which they really *know nothing*, when they wish to explain mysterious things and they can think of nothing more plausible? This is akin to the habit of attributing everything to God, of whom again *nobody knows anything*. No doubt it will be some centuries yet before the people—the great mass of people—come to see what a simple and natural phenomenon the Aurora Borealis actually is. Any one thing

Witches and
Witchcraft.

in this world is just as simple as another, if you only understand it. It is easy to do any trick—if you know how—and it is just as easy to lift a ton as it is to lift fifty pounds, if you only have the strength. There is no radical difference in things any way.

Everybody knows that it is not such a great while since superstitious people were frightened at the appearance of an eclipse. Many nice, sensible people to-day would not be one of a party of thirteen for anything! Something awful would be sure to happen, for thirteen is generally reckoned to be a fatal number. To make the venture safe, great pains would always be taken to make the number either one more or one less—anything but thirteen! Do you see?

The Religious
Question. The subject that gave me most concern, after reaching mature age, and even before, and to which I turned my most serious thoughts and devoted attention, was the religious question. Of course in my youth, like all good little boys, I took the course as it was served up to me. Literally, I swallowed everything that was set before me. I read my catechism, I learned verses in the Bible, I went to Sabbath School, as everybody that is anybody is supposed to do in his younger days. Indeed, I had the full benefit of religious instruction—there can be no question on that matter. I read *Pilgrim's Progress*, *Baxter's Saint's Rest*, and books

of that order. They were in my father's library, and were almost the only books that I could find in the family mansion. Of course there was a Bible and a hymn book, but that is implied. I listened to what the pastor said, and I remembered what my earnest Christian parents taught me. Pious people were quite common in those days—but that is a good many years ago. I really believed there was a God—somewhere in the wilderness, or in the clouds above. I believed that he was good to good people and bad to the other kind always; and for that reason I uniformly tried to be as good as I possibly could be, under the circumstances. I wanted to be on the safe side, and that is the natural desire of almost everybody, even at this late and very advanced period of the world. Nobody knows exactly what might happen, especially when he reached the other side of Jordan. If he had an honorable discharge, he would naturally want to show it, and therefore he should have it with him.

Early Days. I do certainly think that religion is a good thing, particularly for people in the early stages of their existence.

After people pass their childhood days, perhaps it does not make so much difference. When people do not happen to know much, it is a good plan to place themselves under the protection and follow the guidance of some one who really does know something. But when people become older, and perhaps wiser withal, it is natural to begin to look around and see if they cannot find an opportunity to start business on their own account. That is

the way I did, and I am willing to recommend the plan. Such a course is good for almost any one, especially one with an inquiring mind. There is nothing quite so nice as to have a will and a way of our own, even if there are some people with a will and a way that is presumably better than ours.

However, it might be remembered, that when a person becomes older and feels strong enough to assert his manhood at all times, he will find that he has little use for either God or the Bible. They will not help him in an emergency to any great extent; two or three thousand years ago they might, but we are speaking about matters in the twentieth century. We can find plenty of chances to help the Lord at any time, but when it comes to the question of the Lord's helping us in return, that is another thing entirely. I have heard a great deal about the Lord's helping people, but while I have lived to a good age, with quite a varied experience, I have never yet seen or heard of a single well authenticated case of the Lord's helping anybody.

Household
Gods. The old Romans had household gods in abundance (spelled with a small g), but they found them a great burden. They had to be fed, the gods did, and they had to be worshipped. They demanded a world of care and attention, often when it was quite inconvenient—and finally, wherever the family went, like Mary's lamb, the household gods were sure to go! This was merely a custom that prevailed two or three thousand years ago, and the people thought they were in duty bound to

follow it to the letter. Like so many others, they wanted to be on the safe side, wherever that might be. But they made a great mistake and wasted a deal of time and patience—to say nothing of the animals slaughtered for the sacrifices. It is worthy of notice that people do not have any household gods now; they seldom or never read the Holy Book; they do not keep the fire burning on the family altar—in fact, they do not have any family altar to begin with. And yet, seemingly, things go along just as well as they did in old Roman times, when as history informs us, the people were abnormally devoted to the gods. They had the gods, as we have the poor, with them always.

What is the use of worshipping
 Worshipping God. God and going to the Church, and making sacrifices daily, when evidently it is not productive of the slightest good? I do not see any use—though others may. However, that is exclusively their affair. I shall not undertake to dictate, should any question arise on this point. I like to see people have their own way. Indeed, I like to have my own way myself, occasionally at least.

For many long years, both in
 Views on Religion. print and out of print, I have spoken very plainly and pertinently on this very important topic. I have uniformly spoken the truth on the subject, as I aim to do on all topics, and now when I am very near the close of a long life, I have not one word to retract nor any statement to modify of all that I have said or

written in this connection. People cannot help what they believe, I admit that, and I am sure I cannot help what I believe. Of course, I am not certain that I am right on this matter, but I am as sure as I care to be. I have from my youth down to the present studied this question in all its bearings, and I have finally reached conclusions that satisfy me, if they do not satisfy any one else.

Remarkable
Change. I am glad to note that there has been a remarkable change in the sentiments of people within the last twenty-five years on this great problem of God, Christianity and the Bible. We have, it is true, the Bible still, but it is by no means the sacred book that it was formerly. It is not an inspired volume in any extraordinary or unnatural sense. A few people turn to it occasionally, and even then it is more for diversion than instruction. The Church has ceased to be the house of God, the holy temple. It has become a place merely of rest, recreation and enjoyment. The short sermon is eminently perfunctory; but usually the exercises are varied and interesting. Even the Sabbath can hardly be called the Lord's day, as things are now. The minister himself has to a certain extent been affected by the spirit of the age. His sermon is not only brief but harmless. He is careful uniformly to wound nobody's feelings. Things that were the burden of his prayer in other days are not even mentioned now. He sends nobody to Hell, and he turns no one from the Church door. He finds that the Church is in

constant need of pecuniary assistance, and a small contribution from the heathen is just as acceptable as if it came from the hands of some professing Christian. A moderate donation in the way of help to the Church is known to cover a multitude of sins. The subject of saving men's souls is one that is never mentioned, under the new order of things. Every man is expected to make his salvation his own private affair, and the idea undoubtedly is a good one. But, really, what are churches for, under the new dispensation?

This

Commercial
Age.

In this commercial age, when all the interest there is in any project lies in "what there is in it," people seem to find very little use for God. Naturally enough, the God of other days, whom our fathers knew and worshipped, is now very much out of date, and people are busy trying to hunt up some suitable substitute. It is hard indeed for any people to get along for any great length of time without having some thing or some being to idolize. People, even grown people, always continue to be children on many points. They are of a very loving disposition and they are most happy when they find something to embrace. The bump of reverence is the most important bump on most people's heads. They must have somebody to love and adore, somebody to fear, somebody to protect them, some one to lean upon for safety and support.

A God

Wanted.

No, people want a God—but it is a new God that they are after just now, a young God, a popular and tal-

ented God, and a fashionable and up-to-date God withal. Of course people will be some little time looking after just such a God. There are not many in market. Ten chances to one, if the critics should happen to come across the right God, they would not be able to recognize him. People are so absurdly particular, and so very hard to suit! Old Rome, and old Greece, had gods (small g) by the thousands and thousands, but it is very doubtful if they had one who would meet the wishes of our church-goers at the present day. Even if we accepted a goddess in place of our Supreme Ruler—Venus, Juno or Diana for instance—we do not believe it would be ten days before the Church would be clamoring for a divorce, on the ground of incompatibility of temper! Venus would be too handsome, Juno too much of a scold, Diana too fond of hunting, and so on throughout the list. It would not do at all to have a goddess. I apprehend things will settle down at last, and people will decide to keep the God they have, for some little time at least.

Anti-
Religious
Sentiment.

What is most remarkable about this religious, or rather anti-religious, movement to which we have been referring, is that it is not confined to any one country, though of course there is less of it to be noticed in Catholic and Mahometan countries than in others. There is a strong and rapidly increasing anti-religious sentiment in America, and one still stronger and much better developed in Germany. England is perhaps less inclined to be revolutionary on religious creeds than France,

but the English as a rule, since they abandoned Catholicism, have never seemed to take Christianity very seriously, especially for every-day use. As a rule, the English consider it a good idea to be enrolled on the books of the established church, not because it is the Lord's church, but because it is the King's church. In France, religious sentiment never gets far below the surface, and many of the best thinkers of the country have an idea that the best religion a man can have after all is simply *no religion at all*. For at least a hundred years or over, the people of France have not been noted by any means for their love of piety.

German
Sentiment.

In countries where people think most, and where they are most inclined to have views of their own, we shall always find the smallest evidence of a devotional spirit. This is especially true of the Germans. In their country we find the greatest number of industrious students and profound thinkers, and there, in Germany, we shall find infidelity in its most positive form. The Germans began long since to study the subject of religion from the standpoint of the critic—not as a source of redemption or as a means of saving their souls, but as a natural growth and development which had its origin exclusively in the mind of man. If the reader is anxious to learn the most advanced views on the subject of religion, he would be most apt to find what he was searching for in some late German work like that of Hartmann. The Germans take hold of a question of philosophy or his-

tory as no other people do. They uniformly go to the bottom in their investigations, and the statements they make can be relied on. They take hold of a problem as if they are in earnest, and in order to reach the true solution, they spare neither time nor effort.

The results attained by late German authors in the field of religious inquiry are quite remarkable, and they have attracted the attention of thinking men throughout the civilized world. That the trend of German thought is and long has been in the direction of unbelief, admits of no question. Even those Germans who keep up the form of religion do so in a half-hearted way that indicates unmistakably that they have no great interest in the business. They give to God a more ethereal or vapory character than formerly, and they are constantly removing him farther and farther from the abodes of man. To the Bible they give a new interpretation, and as a book it has come to be treated like any ordinary product of the human brain.

In 1907, in order to ascertain more definitely the sentiments of the leading German thinkers on this religious problem, a circular was sent out with a set of questions formulated with a view to ascertaining the position of these thinking men on the leading religious questions of the day. There were eighty answers received, and these were subsequently published in book form, under the title of "Religious Instruction—Eighty opinions." These thinkers were nearly unanimous in

the opinion that Christianity had no claims to being an "absolute" religion. It is merely one of the creeds, among the many creeds of the day. According to the views of these men, Christ takes a place among the heroes, teachers and reformers of the world. They deny the claim that Christianity should be regarded as a religion of redemption. They discard the doctrines of Christian self-denial and self-sacrifice. In their opinion, the world should be taken as it is, and people must simply make the best of it. Instead of continually sacrificing for others, they believe that it is the best way for each one to sacrifice for himself. In their view, religion is not something to be taught and learned, but something to be felt and experienced. Finally, according to the replies under consideration, "The dogmas of Christianity are to a large extent a contradiction of the modern researches of natural science."

Following a radical change in our religious belief, we must necessarily have a corresponding change on all other questions, and particularly in our views on social, moral and political problems. Religious belief is always fundamental. The belief which a man has formed in regard to God, Christ and the Bible, determines to a very large extent what he shall believe on other questions, especially those of a moral or political nature. If we believe in a God who is not only a father, but a lord over us, we should naturally carry out

this idea of a master in all the affairs of life. And this is precisely what we have done. We have kings and rulers simply because we have a God. If God is a monarch, he must have instruments, he must have satraps and vicegerents, as kings always have, and such instruments are uniformly ordinary men.

Less Faith
in Kings.

People having lost their faith in God, as a master and protector, naturally lose faith also in governors and kings. The divine right of masters is an idea that is pretty generally discarded now by intelligent men both in Europe and America. For many long years I have written and published against the right of any one man to be the master of other men under any possible conditions. I have denied not only the right of one man to rule another, but I also deny most emphatically any one's right to judge or condemn another; and likewise I deny his right to torture and punish another, *whether in accordance with law or against law*. I have no high regard for law in any form, no matter whence it emanates. An act may be legitimate, and still be decidedly improper. It is time for people to cease worshipping law, or those rather who make law for their own use and convenience. Law is simply the measure of some man's power, or of the power of some political party. *It has nothing at all to do with right or justice in the proper sense of the terms.* As a rule, in practice,

Trial
a Farce.

the right of one man is the wrong of some other man. What a farce is a trial in court, when we come to view

it in the clear light, and are able to see and appreciate what it really means! What does it prove, when all is said and done? In such a trial, what is demonstrated as to the real wrongs or rights of either party? What we reach finally is the opinion of the court, and we get what follows, the decision of the judge, or his sentence. I am glad to notice that the people very generally are coming to appreciate the enormity of court processes and court proceedings, no matter how legitimate or formal they may be, nor how regular or how orderly we may find the whole transaction.

Sun of Lib-
erty Rising. I am glad to know that the sun of liberty is slowly rising upon the world at last, and to feel confident of the fact that governors and judges and sheriffs and executioners will not always be tolerated among civilized and enlightened men, as they are to-day. Perhaps savages may be expected to kill and eat individuals of their own or some other race, but that is because they are both ignorant and hungry. No doubt, under the circumstances, we shall have to excuse them for such irregularities. However, from enlightened men, either with or without religion, we have a right to expect better results. I am not particular as to whether they make a practice of loving their neighbor or not. They certainly ought to have a due and wholesome regard for their neighbor's feelings and rights at all times and under all conditions. On that ground I have long stood, and there I propose to stand at least a while longer.

The Marriage
Question.

Next to the question of law and government in importance, is the question of marriage, an institution which the Church has long claimed as belonging exclusively to her own domain. The Church and the clergy have designedly given marriage such a divine or supernatural character as neither God nor man could ever have intended to give in the beginning. It has at last come to be believed, especially among those of our people who are quite susceptible, that one of the most important duties of the Lord is to hunt up couples and match them for matrimony. I am glad to notice, however, that there is a growing tendency just now, among sensible people, to divorce the church from all ordinary affairs of love, and the belief is coming to prevail that God properly has nothing more to do with matrimony than he has with ordinary kitchen work or that of the dairy.

The question of marriage is one of supreme importance to all mankind, and there is no other problem to which time and study could be devoted with a better promise of results than the one which we have now under consideration. It is not a question as to what the Lord wishes, or what the Bible or the clergy declare, but what do sensible men say, and what are evidently the best interests of mankind, not only for the present but for time to come? In this case we have before us an ordinary business question and one just like any other important question in practical life. We want first of all to divest ourselves entirely of our prejudices and our preconceived notions. The

past is gone beyond recovery—we are unable to mend that in any manner. Let us turn our thoughts and efforts to the present and inquire what it is best to do now.

Too Early
to Solve.

It is too early to undertake to solve this problem just at this moment. Revolutions that are too sudden and too violent are never productive of desirable results. It is easy to tear down, but not so easy to build up. A bad system is generally better than no system at all. Nothing is usually more disastrous in its consequences than a chaotic state of affairs. What we want just now is not so much to have a change as to be in readiness for the change when it comes. Let us agitate and discuss, and let us continue to agitate and discuss. What is wanted by the people, on this as well as upon other questions of reform, is more thought, more study, more inquiry, and *more light*. People always choose the right way as opposed to the wrong way, when their pathway is so well illuminated as to enable them to determine unquestionably whither their journey is leading them. Much has been effected by discussion already—very much more than might have been expected from the small amount of effort that has thus far been made.

Status of
Woman.

Woman, the married woman especially, is not the helpless slave that she was found to be even as late as the close of the last century. She is now conceded to have rights of her own. She is qualified to hold property in her own right; she has an opinion of

her own, with permission to express it as she chooses. Above all, the right to earn her living in any of the ordinary walks of life, is now conceded to her. She is no longer the slave of any one necessarily. Instead of relying upon God or man for assistance, she is learning to depend upon her own intellect and her own strong arm. She does not as yet stand upon a plane quite as high as that upon which man is placed, but that is because her work is not yet completed. Lasting revolutions are never the work of a moment. It is some satisfaction to realize that woman does not need to get married now, unless she chooses; and after marriage she need not tolerate the brutalities of a husband simply because she must have a home. There is absolutely no reason why any woman should be denied a single privilege to-day that is usually accorded to man.

To Marry,
or Not.

To marry or not to marry, that is indeed the question, and one that I am not prepared to answer without more time and more light than I have had thus far. I am quite certain that I should not be in a hurry about the matter, and in any event, I should never trouble a minister or justice of the peace with such an affair. I would save my money and dispense with services of that character. Marriage, I am sure, is exclusively a business matter, and the subject should always be so treated. There is nothing sacred or supernatural about the transaction. It is for all practical purposes a partnership matter, and the conditions should be such as to secure justice and fair treatment to the parties

concerned. Marriage on any other basis than this will not be found conducive to the best interests of society.

A Readjustment needed. There is no question at all that the time has come for a readjustment and a radical change in the relations between the two sexes. We should follow nature and common sense and ignore the Jewish doctrines of the Bible on this question. Let there be less love, less gallantry, less slavery for woman, and more justice and fairness, more that is rational and manly, on the part of man. When the complete emancipation of woman is once achieved, the marriage question will be settled for all time and in short order. Marriage as an institution will cease to exist; it is a custom that can be tolerated only so long as woman is content to remain, as she so long has been, merely man's helpmeet and slave. We shall ultimately have, no doubt, something different, if not something better in its stead. The world moves and times and customs change necessarily. As to love as we have it exemplified in this country, but as it is found in no other, either among savages or the civilized, that is something that might be dispensed with to the advantage of both men and women.

Marriage Customs. In concluding our remarks on this subject, one might remind the reader that marriage has not always been a religious institution, or even a state institution. Among the Romans, the agreement of the couple themselves was the only marriage con-

dition. The introduction of the bride into the family of the husband was the concluding ceremony. With the old Germans marriage was a civil contract. As a matter of history it is known that it was not until the twelfth century that marriage in Europe became characteristically a religious affair, and it was not until the fifteenth that the custom generally prevailed. It was a decree of the Council of Trent, Nov. 1563, that first established the doctrine formally and legally.

The Labor
Topic.

For our next topic in this connection we will take up briefly the subject of Labor—its purposes and its uses in everyday life. In the Bible, as we all know, labor is condemned as a curse to man. But is it practically or necessarily a curse, or even an evil? No, the Bible theory is wrong, and unfortunately this is not the only case where man has been misled by the false teachings of this remarkable volume. Labor is actually a blessing, unquestionably a blessing, and it should be so considered by the human race. Labor presents to man the only condition on which sound health can be maintained. Those who will not labor, or who will not take bodily exercise in some form, must not expect to live to a good age, or in any true sense to enjoy life. Moderate labor, when it is not converted into a task or burden, may, and often does, become actually a source of enjoy-

ment. So far as the matter of fatigue is concerned, where is the essential difference between labor and play as a pastime?

It is well known that the primary condition on which society may continue to exist is that somebody must work—either father or somebody else, or both. Who shall it be? I have my own opinion on that matter, and I am willing that others shall have theirs. My humble opinion is, and long has been that any one in fair health who is too good to work is *too good to live*; and if that doctrine should ever come to prevail, the world would be happier than it is, and we should at once find an astonishing increase in the number of honest men and virtuous women. It is evident enough that nothing is accomplished in all this world without labor. In all countries where nature does most for man, it will be found that man does least for himself. For developing strength, nothing is so useful as resistance.

The Matter
of Wealth.

Following the question of Labor and coming in close connection with it, is the question of Wealth. Are riches worth what they cost? Do they repay the labor and self-sacrifice that are required to secure them, and the care and worry that is implied in the effort to retain them? I should say emphatically and unquestionably, *they do not*. They are not a worthy object of ambition for any sensible and well intentioned man. The desire for riches,

it is true, comes from a worthy source, from an appreciation of the value and uses of economy, from an understanding of the power of thrift, affording as this does the only security within the reach of mankind against want and dependence in the declining years of life. Wealth comes from saving, with the very best of motives in the first place, but it ultimately degenerates into a vice, a passion for gain and a desire for accumulation that at last becomes a form of insanity. Any virtue can be converted into a vice by carrying it to excess; food itself becomes a burden or a poison when swallowed voraciously or taken in quantities that surpass reasonable limits.

The desire for the accumulation of wealth as it manifests itself at the present time in this country, is absurd in the extreme. The habit—for habit it certainly is—is not founded on reason. People do not pile up wealth because they imagine they shall need it, or because they ever expect to use it in any worthy manner. They want it because they see others have wealth, and it is something, as they know, that is not easy to secure. The gaining of wealth appears to many people like a victory, an achievement. It seems to give them power. It does give them power. But it is power that is dearly bought; it always has to be surrendered in the end, for there is no record of a dying man ever being able to take a dollar with him at the close of his earthly career.

And this estate that has been acquired with so much of toil and sacrifice, what finally becomes of it as an

Inheritance.

inheritance when the ancestor himself dies? He knew all along that he must die some day or other, and that nothing could save him; his ducats could not, his summer homes, his yachts, his automobiles, his fleet horses, and even his numerous wives or widows, could not rescue him! He departs never more to return. That is sad indeed. But really what becomes of the treasures that he leaves? They are gone, gone, no one knows exactly where—dissipated, dispersed, destroyed, thrown to the winds at last! That is the saddest part of the whole business, sadder yet than the departure of the fortune-founder himself. How trifling really was the value of all his gains! He would have given them all for only a few days more, of life! But it was too late—*too late!* There is no graft for Death. The departed might have lived longer, and better, but he preferred Wealth. Therein his fatal mistake was made.

Under the most auspicious circumstances the inheritance goes to those who did not earn it—and to those, therefore, who did not deserve it. They take it, of course, because they are next of kin, but after all what has that to do with the question? Why would not the next of kin of somebody else do just as well, or better? No doubt somebody else would answer, but the law, having the stability of government in view always, establishes a different practice. That is how it comes in all such cases. The law does it. Does the property of the deceased, or of the testator, usually go where he desired, or where he expected it would go? No, it is rare that it does. So, where can we

find one sensible or substantial argument to encourage people to accumulate property to be left behind them when they die? I never yet could see, and so I have never bothered my head with any unworthy ambition like this.

Bible
Teachings.

We have noticed already the effect of the Scriptures upon law, upon government, upon marriage, upon labor. Now let us dwell briefly upon the effect that Bible teachings have upon men in their neighborly relations with each other. Many who are not careful observers have come to regard the Bible as a book of love. And no doubt it does teach the doctrine of love, just such love as we find among men generally at the present day. There is nothing at all peculiar or anomalous about love as exemplified in our Bible. All over the world people like those who please them, and that is the kind of love that is taught in the Holy Book. We are not taught in this book to love others because *we* are good, but because *they* are good, and because their conduct and personal appearance happen to strike us favorably. In the Bible and out of the Bible, we notice that men are loved because their faith is the faith of their friends; or because all are members of one family, or they all belong to one coterie. That is the kind of love, it will be observed, that they had in Bible times and Bible lands; and they have precisely the same kind of affection in every civilized

section of the world at the present time. I am free to say I am not at all partial to that kind of sentiment. There is nothing strange or unusual about it, but society and law built upon such a foundation as that is like a house founded upon the sand. *It cannot endure.*

Love and Friendship. I would still further urge that love in any form is an unsafe basis on which to establish society. Love is something that is at all times capricious. It cannot be relied on—either the love of God, the love of friends, or the love of men and women generally. Love at best is extremely fickle and selfish. People love us so long as we are able or inclined to contribute to their enjoyment, and not a moment longer. Even God, our father, loves his children so long as they are obedient, and that is the way with loving fathers generally. Children that do not behave well are hated and discarded, not loved and cherished. So friendship is a very fine thing among people, so long as it lasts. *But it does not last.*—certainly not for any great length of time. Then, too, friendship, is such an expensive article! Our friends expect so much and demand so much of their friends! And there is ordinarily, so little that they find an opportunity of doing in return. Of course, these are trifles and they should not be mentioned, among friends, and still they are just such things as people cannot help but mention, because, as I have remarked, people always expect so much of friends! What is the use of having a friend if he cannot or will not be ready to serve us when help is wanted?

As already intimated, love and friendship are comfortable possessions, generally speaking, but they are found to cost so much when the books are closed and the balance is finally struck! It is a safe, sensible and profitable thing to be on pleasant, neighborly terms with everybody—but right there is a good place to stop and consider. If you are the intimate friend of anybody, do not forget that you are mortgaged so long as the friendship lasts, and occasionally the obligation is found to last longer than the friendship. This happens when a man is called upon to pay a note that he endorsed, some time ago, just to please a friend.

Giving and
Charity.

The idea of giving is closely allied with the idea of loving. Why should anybody ever give anything to another? There is no special reason why, but many people do not care to have a reason for all that they do. Why should we do anything for nothing, or anything without some occasion or motive? Sensible people seldom or never do. They always have a motive, some purpose, some object in view, even when they make presents to friends. Of course there is no harm in people's giving to anybody at any time, if they feel so disposed. But, really, is it sensible, is it profitable, is it prudent or polite? My answer to this question is that it is neither polite nor profitable, and therefore it is not sensible. As a rule people always count for little what costs them little, and

ordinarily what costs nothing is worth nothing. The first impression is that, if what people had was worth anything, they would not be so foolish as to give it away. We appreciate things that cost us something—some toil, some study, some money.

The Motive
of Giving.

In most cases, the purpose of giving is simply to bribe in some way, either to induce the recipient to do what he has not done, or would not do, or to have him continue doing what he had done before. This is the way many people do, when they feel either very liberal or decidedly interested, or both; but as a business investment, I should consider the action poor policy. It would seem to be the most sensible plan to pay what we agree to pay, or ought to pay, pay promptly, and *stop there*. There certainly can be no such thing as an obligation to give. Where there is an obligation, it is not a giving, but simply a payment of what we owe. No, the only true giving is to be found where there is no duty to give, no need to give. There may be a fashion or custom to give, but fashion or custom cannot create an obligation for me or any one else. Let those give who desire to give, and let them give what they wish to give. It is for each individual alone to say when he shall give, to whom he shall give, for what purpose, or whether he shall or shall not give at all. How intensely selfish it is, how contemptible, for people to be continually telling others what *they* ought to give! Why are not they themselves the ones who should give? If they did their duty in giving,

perhaps there would be no need of others giving. There is only one case where people can come forward with a proper appeal to give, and that is for charity. Even there it is for ourselves to say how much we shall give, or whether we shall or shall not give. Nobody has the right to lay down rules for other people to observe. It is well known that even charity suffers from great abuses. When we give to one, we often harm another. We certainly often overlook another who is, no doubt, quite as deserving as the one favored.

Charity and
Paupers. Above all, charity multiplies paupers and encourages dependence upon others. People who have their living given them and a home furnished have no inducement to work for their subsistence, and they seldom do. Why should they continue to toil, when the best of people get at most merely a living? The idea of giving, like that of sacrificing, comes largely from the Bible, and the duty in one case is no greater than it is in another. We are told to give to the Lord, but does the Lord ever see or hear of the donation? No, it usually falls into the hands of the priests whose business it is to represent the Lord, especially in cases like this where there is something to receive and enjoy. Even charitable gifts often fail to reach the destination for which they were intended.

Phrasis. We will close this part of the work with a reference to some of the important teachings of *Phrasis*, a book

which appeared in 1864 and which presents a comparative view of the different languages of the world. The problems in philology which are considered in this work were attracting at that time a great deal of attention not only in Europe, in Germany in particular, but also among the linguists of America. But for some reason, interest in this science for the last twenty-five years has been very much on the decline, and at this moment there are few signs of an early revival. It was from lack of encouragement that this study was finally abandoned by the author, and his efforts have latterly been turned to questions that interested him in other departments of literature—very much, it should be added, to his regret. He had given long years of study to this subject, and after a time, with the expenditure of large sums of money in securing the books needed in such an enterprise, to say nothing of repeated travels abroad, he had become acquainted with the structure of practically all the languages of Europe, together with the best known and most important languages of both Africa and Asia.

There is a great charm in such an investigation properly conducted, and I have never yet found any other literary work that was equally fascinating. But I never like to carry coals to Newcastle, nor would I for one moment urge the public to pursue inquiries which I happen to prize highly, but in which the people themselves do not seem to have any special concern. I have always considered it to be tiresome work to undertake either to lead or mislead the masses.

New Views
of Language.

The conception of language which I have formed after much study is very different from the theory which prevails on this subject at the present day among literary men generally. I regard language as an instrument in the hands of man; but it was not a contrivance, nor a construction in any true sense of the word. It was not even a discovery. I venture to say no two or a dozen men, whether wise or not wise, ever assembled together or sat down with the design of constructing or contriving a language in any manner. Nothing that was lasting was ever reared in any such way. Society certainly was not thus produced; neither was it so with art, science, law, government or the church. All things grow, slowly, steadily grow; and so does language grow to-day, as it has done in the past all along.

Philologists generally have an idea that language is made up of words, while according to *Phrasis* the sentence is the unit. A sentence represents a thought, an idea; but a word represents nothing, being simply a shadow of what exists in the mind of man. It is a very great mistake to imagine for a moment that words express thoughts or ideas. A nod, or a shake of the head expresses full as much as "yes" or "no." Words are usually considered by philologists to be the substance of language, when in fact they are merely the scaffolding put up to enable men to carry on the operation of thinking, just as letters in algebra, figures in arithmetic and lines in geometry are used to aid in carrying on the process of

reasoning and calculation. A sculptured idol or a painted Madonna is not at all different in character or service from the word signs that we have just been considering. The idol is not the god, the picture is not the Madonna, and the word is in no sense the object which it is supposed to represent. Besides, there is absolutely no connection or relation in any case between the sign and the thing signified. What real meaning can there be in the dots and short lines of a telegram? As much as there is in letters, and no more. What stands for a word is always a mere sign.

Written
Words.

We must bear in mind that the spoken word comes before the written or printed word. Written words change in order to have the form correspond with any alterations that may be made in the utterance of the spoken word. This is one of the reasons why written words change their form, but there is a host of other reasons, some of which we know, while others are concealed from our view. One of the leading reasons why words are uttered differently, not only by those of different races but by two persons of the same race, lies in the difference in temperament, and especially in the vocal organs. As a matter of fact no two persons speak the same words in exactly the same manner, or with the same intonation. A child has one way, a colored person, especially in the south, has another way; and of course a foreigner always speaks our language with an accent, or modulation, that is more or less peculiar. Considering all the circumstances, it is impossible that the case

should be otherwise. People using the same language often give a strange twist to their words, or utter them with a snap or jerk, or a lisp, a drawl, or a sigh. Some convert ordinary words of three syllables into words of one or two, while others again extend one or two syllables to three. Some people sing when they talk, as others talk when they sing. No two people sing alike. Why should they speak the language alike? As a matter of fact they never do. No two people paint alike; no two ever do anything just alike. It would be quite impossible. It is not at all strange that there is so much variety in language. It is not only natural but absolutely necessary. A child says "up," "up," for "take me up," and "hungry," for "I am hungry," suppressing as superfluous, or ignoring, many accompanying words that we uniformly use. The Chinese, with their child language, express themselves in a similar way. Very much of the expression of a sentence with us falls upon the emphasized word.

Changes for
Harmony.

A very large portion of the changes made in the forms of words, especially in certain languages like the Greek, and more or less in all languages, is on account of harmony, smoothness or euphony. Meaningless words, expletives, are thrown in, syllables are added or suppressed, and words are clipped or abbreviated, simply to promote smoothness and render sounds pleasing to the ear. Many people of our own country cannot sound the letters of the alphabet as the majority of people do, the trouble lying usually in the throat, or

the vocal organs, but sometimes in the nasal organ or the tongue. When we come to compare ourselves with people of different races, we find there are letters in their alphabet that we cannot possibly sound properly, just as there are letters in our alphabet that they cannot by any effort render satisfactorily. Many people cannot sound *th* in *this*; a Frenchman says *zis*; a German says *dos*, or *das*, for *that*, and *de*, for *the*, *ding*, for *thing*, and he rarely learns to say it otherwise. That is his way. To foreigners generally, our *which* and *whom*, and words of that character, are absolutely impossible. There is nothing of the kind in their tongue. On the other hand an American finds it difficult, and often impossible, to sound the German accented *ö* and *ü*, or the ordinary *u* of French. Then there are the German *eu*, French *oi*, German *ch*, in *nacht*, or *g* in *tag*, or French *eu*, *en*, *an*, and *eil*. Foreigners usually cannot sound our *r* properly, and *l* is often substituted. The Chinese say *Mel-iken* man for American. The Mohawks have no dentals, and in Hawaii *steel* is sounded *kyla*. Then, again, fancy or custom is the cause of many changes that are found in language. An Englishman puts an *h* where we omit it, and suppresses it where we use it, merely because he is an Englishman and he likes that way. Of course there is no value in the *h*, and whether it is used or omitted is a matter of no moment. So the Latins say *sonus* for *sound*, and *nomen* for *name*, because that happens to be the Roman way. The Kaffirs in adopting foreign words, add their own prefixes to meet their wants or wishes, as *igolida*

for *gold*, *ibere*, for *bear*, *umperisite* for *priest*; the Chinese have *Eulopa* for *Europe*. So the French have *pere*, Latin *pater*, for our *father*. Other people say *eschola* for *school*, *yspryd* for *spirit*, and *esperer* for Latin *sperare*.

Changes
of Words. There is a tendency in language for words to assume a slight change in form to correspond with the new tone or the new application of the word. Thus, we have *prem-ise* for *premise*, *read* present, and *read* past, *lead* and *led*, *come* and *came*, *sit* and *set*, *lie*, *lay*, and *place*, Latin *jaceo*, to lie, and *jacio*, and *jacto*, to cause to lie, to cast or throw; Latin *clamo*, to cry and *clamoto*, to cry frequently, *cano*, to sing, and *canto*, to sing, chant; *capio*, to catch, hold, *capax*, adj., holding, capacious, also *capesso*, to seize eagerly; *capra*, a goat, and *capella*, a little goat; also adjectives from nouns as *capitalis*, capital, from *caput*, a head.

No New
Element. We may note here, as we shall see more clearly as we proceed with our comparison of words, that no new element is added, affixed or inserted in any of the words that we have thus far given as examples. All related words are modifications of one and the same word, as *capitalis*, is only a form or development of Latin *caput*, and *jacto*, to throw, is only a form either of *jaceo*, to lie, or *jacio*, to throw. So in our names *John* and *Johnnie*, *sis* and *sissie* and *sister*, *cat* and *kittie*. The best illustration of the manner in which words grow, or change their forms without taking on any new addition, may be found in the proper name *Elizabeth* and its modifications: *Eliza*, *Elsie*, *Liz*, *Lizzie*, *Lib*, *Libbie*,

Isabella, Belle, Beth, Bep, Bets, Betsy. So also *Rob, Robert, Bob; Sarah, Satie, Sally, Sadie; Margaret, Meg, Madge, Meta, Reta, Peg, Peggy, Gret, Greta, Grettie.* No one suspects for a moment that these related words are not all forms of one and the same thing. No one thinks that *Liz* or *Lib* is in any way less than *Eliza* or *Elizabeth*. It is evident enough that the letters of a word never constitute the word itself. Just so what we call the deceased is not really he but his remains.

The tendency of words to change their forms slightly to correspond with some difference in meaning or application, is most strikingly exemplified in the case, gender and number endings of nouns, and in the tense forms and person endings of verbs. That all these changes are identical in character with those that we have just been noticing in other departments of language, is something that is beyond all doubt. In all these cases there is a modification in the form of the word without anything new being either added or taken away. There are fewer of these changes in case and tense endings in English than in any other language in Europe. Even our near relatives, the German people, have many endings that we have not. We have only a few scattered remnants of endings, such as the possessive case and the plural ending, which, by the way, have one and the same origin. We have no such feature as adjectives agreeing with the noun, as we find to be so noticeable, and often so embarrassing, in the other languages of Europe.

Word
Changes.

What we do find in English that is worthy of notice is the change in the endings of nouns and adjectives when they come to fill a new place or perform a new function, as in *grievous* from *grief*; *newness*, from *new*; *wisdom*, *wisely*, from *wise*; *dental*, from Latin *dens*; *oaken*, from *oak*; *contrivance*, *contriver*, *contriving*, *contrivement*, *contrivable*, all being forms of *contrive*. All these endings, and many more of a similar character in other words, are mere variations of the Latin participle or gerund ending *-end*, *-and*, *-ant*, *-ent*, *-ans*, *-ens*. They add nothing to the meaning and they can be suppressed without loss or detriment at any time. What we call a contrivance, or a contriving, we might quite as well call a contrive; and so we might as well say "he walk slow and easy" as to say "he walks slowly and easily." Plain and simple people use very few superfluous endings.

We come now to verbs. Their multitudinous forms as they are given in the paradigms which are shown in Latin and Greek grammars present a formidable array, and yet when we come to understand the matter fully, we shall find that all the various forms, of *amo*, for instance, are mere modifications of one and the same root. According to the theory advanced in *Phrasis*, the present tense is based on the gerund or present participle; all there is of the six person forms, *amo*, *amas*, *amat*, *amamus*, *amatis*, *amant*, is simply the form *amand-um* or *amant-is*, with variations. The present tense in full would be *I am loving*, or *at loving*, or

a *loving*,—the *am*, *is*, and *are* being suppressed, and thus leaving the *amand* or *amant* to go on with its development. On this theory, the case endings and the person endings are in their origin identical. All that we have in English of the six person forms of Latin is *lov-eth*, and this form is becoming obsolete. This *eth*, is clearly a modification of *and*, *end*, the mark of the verbal noun.

The tense forms of Latin and Greek are doubtless mere variations of such bases as *amandum*, *amatus*. In English and German it is quite evident that the past tense is simply the past participle, based on the form *have loved*, the *have* being finally suppressed. In German it is quite common to say *I sung*, for *I have sung*, *I come*, for *I have come*, and occasionally the same thing is noticed in English.

Here quite as well as elsewhere, perhaps, we may dwell briefly upon expletives, words thrown in either to give a smoother and more pleasing sound, or to keep in accord with the law and the fashion. Many words are pure expletives that are not usually considered to be such, as *it* and *there*, in *it is*, *there is*. They have no meaning, no force whatever. The same view may be taken of most prepositions and conjunctions, and likewise of many adverbs and pronouns, as, *in vain*, *at once*, *at least*, *a going*, *a fishing*, *a walking*, *to walk*, *to work*, *at work*, *a-bed*, *to bed*, *alike*, German *zu-gleich*, French *de nouveau*, *a-new*, *at home*, *for home*; *in the night*, German *nachts*, *morgends*, *in the morning*. In all these and similar cases, the meaning lies wholly in the base word, and the preposition or participle

is practically without significance. The articles *a* and *the* are really meaningless particles, like the *to* of our infinitives. We notice this fact more particularly in such expressions as *the more, the less*. We might add that our *the*, our *to* of infinitives and *de* of French are identical words, and they are often used for each other. The Greek *to loipon*, the rest, and *to prin*, formerly, *ta prota*, first, are illustrations of the same truth.

Quite akin to the meaningless
 Prefixes prepositions and particles that we
 to Verbs. have just been considering are the
 prefixes to verbs, and to other words, which are found so generally in different languages, as in *extract, contract, attract, retract, detract, subtract; collect, recollect, colleague, elect, select*, all of Latin origin. It has generally been supposed that in all such cases prepositions or prefixes have in some way and for some purpose, been tacked upon the main word. But in *Phrasis* a different view of the matter is taken. These prefixes are uniformly without any real significance; in many cases the prefixes can be suppressed without any detriment so far as the meaning of the word or the sentence is concerned. There is no appreciable difference between *agone* and *gone*, *alive* and *live*, *apart* and *part*; Latin *advenire* is not different from *venire* and German *zuommen* is the same as our *come*; French *partir* is same as our *depart*, *esquire*, is same as *squire*, and *establish* is the same as *stablish*; Latin *pervado, evado*, is same as our *wade*, and Latin *perturbo* is the same as *turbo*, our *disturb*; *strip* equals *unstrip*, *sever* equals *dissever*; *persuade* and *dissuade* are not different

and Latin *traho* is same as *extraho*. We have *mandment*, and *com-mandment*, Latin *stinguo*, *extinguish*, *laud* and *applaud*, and so on indefinitely.

All Prefixes
Growths.

There is no question that all these prefixes in all languages are mere growths, a sort of reduplication, of the initial letters of the main word. The form of the prefix, being as it is a mere development of initial letters, is governed largely by the laws of euphony. So *subpress* becomes *suppress*, and *evince* and *evolve* take the place of *exvince* and *exvolve*. It will be observed that with the change in the prefix there usually goes a shade of difference in meaning, as in *impel*, *expel*, *repel*, but the fundamental idea remains the same in all. It is merely a *driving*. So in *oppress*, *suppress*, *express*, *impress*, *depress*, it is simply a matter of *pressure* clear through. The meaning of a word does not change because of the prefix, but it is quite possible that the prefix may change because of a variation in the meaning of the base word. It is possible also that these prefixes may be thrown off from the parent stem and become separate words, as in the case of the German and English *to* of infinitives and *ex* of the Latin prefixes.

Augments. A variation of the prefixes that we have under consideration is found in what is called the augment of verbs, as the *e* of the Greek past, which is found also in Sanscrit and Armenian. There is also the reduplicated initial which serves as a sign of the perfect in Greek, Gothic and Latin. This prefix *e* of the Greek past, as in *eleipon* I left, is an ordinary

case of initial change made to serve a special purpose, as we often find in different languages. It is no doubt akin to the German *ge*, *gi*, *g*, which is the well known mark of the past participle, as *geschlagen*, from *schlagen*, to slay, strike. This *ge*, *g*, *e*, *a*, is often used in other places and for other purposes, just as we find to be the case with the augment *e*. The German introduced his *ge* before the participle, just as we use *to* before the infinitive, because that is his way. He does so for the very reason that the Englishman uses an *h* where we do not, merely because it is his way and it meets his fancy. He might dispense with it, but he would not be English if he did so. The *a*, the *ge*, the *g*, like the *h*, are all mere breathings.

We have noticed that certain races use an *e* or *a* as a sign of the past tense, though they also use the same letter for other purposes, and the Germans use *ge*, *g*, *gi*, *chi*, *i* as a prefix marking the past participle as well as occasionally for the past tense. So the Semitic languages have several prefixes and particles for their verbs and verbals. In Persian the prefix *be* is the sign of the future. The Celtic people have several special words which they use with their verbs. Thus the Irish use *do*, our *to*, as a sign of the past, and *a* is sometimes used for the same purpose. The Slavic races very generally use prefixes to verbs to indicate past time or completed action. The Old Germans in the Middle Ages used *do* and *der* to form the past, as *der sprach*, spoke, *der mach*, made. Our *there was* is the same thing. Using prefixes, or breathings, is quite an arbitrary mat-

ter. Some races employ them, and others dispense with them. That is all there is of the practice. It is just as it is in painting houses, some prefer one color and others another color, and yet any one color is as correct as any other. In extreme cases, the house can go without painting.

Redupli-
cation.

Of the reduplication, a prefix which characterizes the Greek perfect, as well as a few verbs in Latin, there is little further to be said. It is merely one of the ways of developing a prefix, and it does not represent any new element or any addition. This feature is found in Gothic, and we see the same principle at work in other tongues.

Words
Compared.

We will conclude this part of the subject by comparing a few words taken from our own and other languages with a view to showing some of the important changes that occur in the development of words, and also to indicate the direction taken by the thoughts of those who make use of words in language. We will take our *leave*, *left*, *let*. In Greek it is *leipo*, Latin *linquo*, *re-linquo*, our *relic*, *relict*, *derelict*—having the meaning of leave, depart, to be left, forsaken, also to be wanting or deficient. It is placed before other words to indicate want, as *leip-ouros*, without tail, or short-tailed. The Greek has another form, *leibo*, to pour, to let fall, *flow*, also to weep, to let fall or shed (tears implied). The Latin has the same word, with the same application, *fleo* to weep, and *ploro*, implore, another form, to call with tears. Then there is the other form *fluo*, to flow, *pluo*, to rain, to let

pour. The Latin *plenus*, full, Greek *pleos* and *polus*, much, also *pleo*, to sail, swim, fluctuate and Latin *fluctus*, a wave, all belong under the head of *flowing*, or *pouring*. Our *fluid*, *liquid* (to leave), meaning to flow, belong to the same class.

The root *leave*, *left*, *let*, has its relatives in German, as in *bleiben*, to leave, to let remain, our *believe*, German *glauben*, faith, believe, also *belauben*, to leaf or leave out. Then there is the German *erlauben*, to let, leave, permit, allow, German *urlauben*, *furlough*, allow, leave (of absence). Leave, to let remain, to let, to permit, are closely related.

Then there is the German *laufen*, (*au* like *ou* in *our*), to run, loaf, leave, to leap, gallop or lope, and elope. Also German *loben*, to praise, our laud and applaud, French *louer*, to let, to hire, French *laisser*, permit, German *lassen*, to let. We say let a house, just as the French do. So we say by your *leave*, your letting, your permission. Our allow, French *louer*, means to approve, justify, hence to love and praise. Going out from the German *loben*, to praise, laud, there is another group. To praise implies price, prize, appraise, love, German *lieben*, Latin *libet* and *lubet*, love. *Praise* and *price*, also *prize*, are identical words; so is appraise and precious. This carries us apparently from leave, let, Greek *leipo*, and still we are within the class or group which includes those words or ideas. It could also be shown that *flower*, *foliage*, *bloom*, *flourish*, and the like, belong to the same class—and doubtless there are many others.

We will notice, very briefly, one more interesting group. The root as it appears in Sanscrit

is *vah*, the idea of which is to *wag*, *move*, *shake*, German *bewegen* to move, Latin *veho*, to carry, make go, our *wag*, *wagon*, *wiggle*, *waggle*, also *vehicle* and *weigh*. The idea of weigh is to lift, to make rise; German *wiege*, a cradle, has the idea of rock, shake. The Anglo Saxon *wegan* of the same family means to carry, to bear; to weigh anchor is to lift anchor; German *wiegen* to move gently. Old High German *wegan* meant to carry and *weigh*, German *weg*, Latin *via*, our *way*, is German *wegen*, *bewegen*, to move, make go. Greek *ocheo*, to carry, belongs to same group. There are also *convey*, *con-vex*, *con-voy*, to be mentioned in this connection.

In connection with the views of Old English. language already presented, a small amount of space may be given to advantage to certain features of the Old English and Anglo-Saxon as these tongues were spoken and written several centuries since. We will find many illustrations there to support the writer in the positions taken in other portions of this work.

The definite article as it appears in Anglo-Saxon, which is really a form of old English, will be found very instructive, especially in connection with certain points that we have been noticing. The article *the* in its different genders and cases, has the following forms among others: *se* and *seo* (identical with our *she*), *thaet* (that), *tham* (them), *thaes* (these), *tha* (they), *thaere* (their, there). When we come to pronouns, we find *ure* (our), *uncer*, (German *uns*, English *us*), *eow*, (you): also *hit* (it), *heo* (she), *hire* (her), *hi* (they), *hira* (their). It is clear

from these examples, and from like evidences in other languages, that our *he, she*, German *sie, the, this, that, these, them, then, than, thence*, and a host of other words like them, are modifications of one root, which like all roots, is of course imaginary. Again, the forms beginning with *wh* are further modifications of the same root, as, *who, when, whence, whether, what, which* (German *welcher*), also *how, here, why, such*, (German *solcher*), *same, self*, etc.

In verbs we find the same phenomenon presented. It is an undoubted fact that *is, was, are, be, been*, are all variations of one and the same word. We say *I am*, while in Swedish it is *I are, he are* (*är*). The Anglo Saxons said *I were, he were*, which is only a form of German *werde*, meaning *are, am, or become*. So also we find in this tongue *gan* and *gangen* (German *gehen*, English *gone*), for *go*; *geseon* (English *seen*) with prefix *ge* for *see*; *gescrifan* (German *schreiben, geschrieben*, Latin *scribo*, English *shrive, and scrivener*, to write, with prefix *ge*; *to slupan*, to loosen, lose, (German *schliessen*), English *loose, lose and close*, Greek *kleio*, Latin *claudo*, English *inclose, exclude, key, lock*, Latin *clavis*, meaning to close or shut. It will be noticed that there is no essential difference between *inclose* and *exclude*. One means to shut in and the other to shut out.

In the Anglo Saxon again, we find

Anglo Saxon Forms. *baeftan*, our *abaft*, and *bast*, *after*, without prefix *a*; also *aright* for *right*, *gebaeck* for *aback*, *genog* for *enough*, with prefix *ge* for *e*; *taforan* for *before*, *ongen* for *against*, *ymbutan* for *about*; and *long* and *gelong* for *along*; *to-geanes* for *against*, *iborn* for *born*,

(German *geboren*), *on morgen* (morning), *in the morning* (German *morgend*). It is well to note that in this tongue, the prefixes—*a-*, *be-*, *bi-*, *for-*, *ge-*, *on-*, *to-*,—may all be used indifferently and interchangeably for each other as prefixes to verbs and verbals, showing clearly that they do not enter into the meaning of words. This same fact may be noticed in the prefixes of other tongues. They are chiefly euphonic in their character and office.

To show how the forms of a word may be multiplied indefinitely, by development, we may take the Anglo Saxon *witan*, to know. Among its changes are the following: *Wita*, wise; *gewita*, conscious, knowing; *gewitan*, to understand; *witegian*, to prophesy; *witig*, wise, knowing; *gewitleas*, witless, foolish; *gewitness*, witness; *witol*, knowing; *witigdom*, wisdom; *witodlic*, to wit; *wittiglice* wittingly—all of these being variations of one and the same root, imaginary as it is.

In old English we find *to don evil*, for to do evil, also *gon they*, for go they; *sone forgete*, for soon forgotten; *y-clothed*, for clad; *y-bounde*, for bound; *y-bake*, for baked; *y-bild*, for built; *it longeth not*, for belongeth not; *were knowe*, for were known.

In closing my remarks on this subject, it has seemed to me that at least a portion of my readers would be pleased to have these inquiries extended a few pages farther, especially if a new direction is taken and certain important features of language are presented in a new light.

It may not be amiss to note in the beginning that, properly speaking, one word does not come from another, nor

One Word
never from
Another.

do the two have any relation whatever. Words, like other things, have an independent existence, if they have any at all. One word is not in any true sense an abbreviation of another; there are really no abbreviated things in this world, no new things that arise from an abbreviation at any time and in any manner. Fred is a name by itself, the same as Frederick is, and the same is true of Tom and Thomas, Harry and Henry, Bill and William, Ben and Benjamin. If Tom were really Thomas shortened, what would become of Thomas himself? One word may suggest another, as one style may suggest another style more or less varied, but independence and identity can never be lost in any instance.

Words usually are properly metaphors, the application being made because of some fancied resemblance in all cases. We say the stream *runs*, as an animal runs, the waters *leap*, as a lion leaps, the waves *roll*, as the ball rolls, the trees *rock*, as the cradle rocks, the storm *rages*, as the mad-man rages. And yet we know very well that the stream does not run, the waters do not leap, the waves do not roll, the trees do not rock, and the storm does not rage. It is poetical license alone that can excuse the use of such expressions as these.

There is a fashion in words as there is in dress. We select our words as we do our garments, largely as a matter of fashion or custom. Of course we often follow preference or fancy. Still oftener

we choose the wrong word for the reason that we do not know the right one. But in no case are we obliged to use any particular word in any particular instance. We can call a man small, mean, vile, low, base, a rascal, a villain, a scoundrel, or anything else that suits our taste or fancy. To the man to whom the epithets are applied it makes no difference what he is called. He remains precisely the same with or without the words. In every case where a word is used some other might be applied. It is all a matter of fashion or education. There is no written law either on orthography, or pronunciation, or on the application of words. What is to hinder people from having their own way in such matters?

New
Meanings. Words are constantly coming to have a new signification, because they are used in new places, with new applications. In Europe our *corn*, is used for grain generally, and so our *hound*, German *hund*, applies to dogs as a species. Very often words become obsolete from superannuation, or some other cause. For all practical purposes they die and are forgotten. But the births in language are more numerous than the deaths, and so our vocabulary is expanding at a great rate. There is no mistake about it, language grows, as other things grow. A very good word frequently comes to have a bad reputation, and nobody will have it in the family; and sometimes a word is in use among one set or race of people, while it is discarded or tabooed among others. The English, for instance, use many words in conversation freely that would be

heard among us only in whispers, if heard at all. Our Holy Bible is loaded down with naughty words, and naughty insinuations, that would not be heard to-day in polite society anywhere in America. It is just as you happen to look at such things; or rather as you have been educated. There is no law that settles such questions of propriety as these—and there never ought to be. Laws never settle anything that was not settled in the first place.

But really is there no such thing as virtue, goodness, or propriety? No, indeed, there is nothing that seems to be settled in that line, because there is no person and no power that is qualified to settle it. Those who wrote the Bible tried, but failed most emphatically. There is nothing to decide all such questions but custom, fashion—with ordinary common sense. What we call good is good, and of course everything else is bad, because by implication we call it bad. With us everything in which we are concerned must be, and is, either one thing or the other, good or bad, true or untrue.

History
of Words. The history and career of words
is the history and career of everything
else. Words are perishable. All we
see of them is the evidences they leave. We never
see them or know them by themselves. They come
and they go; they are here to-day and absent to-
morrow. We may remember them for a brief
time, but they are sure to be forgotten and un-
known a short time hence. Men lose their interest
in words, as they do in other things, because they

have ceased to be of use to them. It is new things always that command their attention. Why should words be remembered? They leave nothing tangible. What is a word at best? Only a scrawl on paper, or perhaps a fleeting sound of the human voice. We call this the word, but it is not the word itself. It is merely the sign of a word, something to awaken thought and move to action. So it is with all things; so it is with man himself. What is laid away in the grave is not the dear one whom we loved in life. That much we know. But where is the personality that we formerly knew? What is it now? That is another question. It is quite beyond our sphere. It is not the place here to consider the problem, even if we had the ability and the inclination. It is with persons as it is with things. We know of them, but we never know them, not fully and truly. We never really know ourself. If we did, we should undoubtedly do better than we do.

Words and
Hiero-
glyphics.

A word is in reality a pure hieroglyphic, a sort of mnemonic to remind one of something that is desired to be recalled to mind. It is in no sense a likeness or copy, yet things are recalled by it as they are by pictures and sketches. It may be noted that a translation, no matter how faithful, is never a copy. The original and the translation are always two independent productions, and usually they are very much unlike each other.

Definition
of Words.

It is a curious fact that we always define words by paralleling them with some other word quite different from

themselves. Indeed, if we used some identical or closely related word, how much wiser would people be? And yet how can any word mean the same as an entirely different word? Are there any two words that are properly synonymous? There are no identities in trees, or houses, or horses, and I venture to assert there are none in the case of words. A word cannot change its nature, even for one moment, by any feat of legerdemain. Two different words could not by any possibility have the same meaning without being one and the same word. However, one word may be used in place of another word; it may have, through metaphor, a new application.

Words get their meaning, it will be remembered, chiefly from association and context, though much depends upon the reader or interpreter, no two persons giving exactly the same meaning to the same word. It is surprising that intelligent and reflecting men should persist in saying that words have a distinct meaning of their own. It is time that the public should have correct notions on this as well as some other subjects. Our ponderous dictionaries are filled with what are supposed to be definitions, but which properly considered are not definitions. Taken alone the best of our dictionaries afford but little assistance in defining words. When words are supposed to mean so many different things, how shall we determine which one is the real meaning? The decision is finally left to the inquirer himself, who is allowed to take his choice. We never get anything better than an approximation.

As a people we are altogether too careless and indifferent in the use of language. As Rousseau aptly and forcibly expresses it: "Words," "yet words," "always words"! This remark applies especially to our schools. Pupils learn words, and usually but little more. What the words really mean, how many readers ever know? How should children know, when even our most intelligent men and women do not know? But how should we expect anything but confusion, when nothing is really determinable, and when words are always defined or described by referring them to something entirely different and distinct from themselves? What the reader should be able to learn from the dictionaries is what a word means in a certain place, in a certain connection, but this information is rarely given. What should be given is the meaning of phrases, remembering that words alone mean nothing. Dictionaries are works of comparatively recent date. They will doubtless improve as they become older. Defining words is merely an operation of our mind. We cannot affect the words or change their meaning in any way. So when we multiply six by five, we get nothing new; it was thirty before multiplying. The figures that we use are merely helps to see and calculate. As a fair illustration of the nature of words, and of the different uses to which they may be applied, we may take the word *work*, though of course there are hundreds of others that would answer the purpose as well.

It should be borne in mind that, as stated repeatedly in this work, a word taken alone means

nothing. The very fact that a word means so many things and has so many applications, is proof that it is not specially connected with any one of them. If a word has several meanings and we mention one of them, we have given only what may be called a part of its accepted meanings.

Words, as we know, get their meaning from what they are associated with, just as we get character and expression from dress and surroundings. Really a word used in two different phrases or sentences can never have exactly the same significance in both cases.

We will give, hurriedly, several expressions to illustrate the varied uses and meanings of this word *work*. Labor is work, and a book is a work—fortifications are works, and there are iron works, wire works, gas works—a deed, an act, is a work, and so a result is a work—to cease work, to stop, to go to work, to begin—to work out, for another party. There is needlework and lace-work. Beer works, it ferments; cathartics work, bees work, birds work, flies work, bugs work, and often greatly annoy us; a plan works, a law works, a ship works, it labors in a storm. To work a mine, to work a farm, to run or work a machine.

These few examples in this one case give a fair idea of how new complications arise, in language, and how words come to have new meanings. Originally, no doubt, a connection might be found between the new and the old meaning of a word, but generally the idea of resemblance, the metaphor, is lost from the minds of the multitude. When we say a scheme works, or we call a ram-

part a work, the reader fails to see why the idea of labor is specially applied in these cases. If a scheme works, so does anything work that succeeds. If we call a fort a work because of the labor connected with it, why not call a wood pile or a hay stack also a work? Of course, as we know, substantially all new words come from metaphors in some way. We might go farther and say that our ideas generally are metaphors. They are uniformly based on resemblances, either actual or imaginary.

PART II

WHAT IS TRUTH?

For thousands of years people have been writing about truth, and yet they know as little about its exact outlines and proper characteristics as they do about the Deity himself. And still they write, still they talk, about truth! People, it will be noticed, talk most volubly and most confidently about things of which they know the least. Garburity is not confined to aged men, nor is babbling to be noticed only among children. If there is a lack of considerateness in much of what people do, there is certainly a similar lack in many of their utterances.

In the first place, it is highly important to bear in mind that such truth as people usually have in view when they treat on that subject, nowhere exists. At least there is no place where it can be readily found. There is no truth for eternity; no truth for this man and that man, and for all the world beside, at one and the same time. Such a truth, we venture to say, has never been known or discovered, and it is doubtful if it ever will be. Truth, the bottom truth, which is all the

truth there is, is always metaphysical, and it is never found lying loose upon the surface. We may occasionally find nuggets of gold scattered about on the ground, but it is not so with truth. The deposit itself has to be searched for, and the material has to be crushed, sifted and separated before anything of appreciable value can be secured. Truth in paying quantities is not usually found exposed to the view of man.

People, many people at least, are too apt to assert that things are true, and insist upon it, simply because they think or believe that they are true. In fact, our belief is all the evidence we have, or can have, to prove that what we assert is really a fact. But, of course, belief cannot be evidence in any case. Nevertheless, we go about repeating our statements, and asking the world to accept them as true, while we have actually nothing to offer in defence of our position that could be regarded as at all reliable. We are ready to give anybody, or everybody, a character, and we never retract even when it is demonstrated that we are mistaken in what we have said. So we give Christ a character, and George Washington a character, but what acquaintance did we ever have with either of these individuals? What do we actually know of the Greeks, the Jews, the Egyptians, the Ethiopians, the Romans and the early Christians? We are ready to tell what they have done and to give our opinion at any time of their character and conduct. But what do we happen to know personally of any of those peoples? *Practically nothing*, and still our assurance remains un-

abated to the last. It has long been stated that Greece is the mother country of civilization, but at the present time it is generally conceded that Greece received its early instruction from such countries as Egypt and Persia. The Greeks have long been praised beyond measure, but now it is known that while they may have been wise or clever in many directions, they certainly, in their palmiest days, were not always virtuous.

While it is known that we are accustomed to place implicit reliance upon our belief at all times, we should not fail to remember that belief is not a constant but a variable quantity. We are not to-day what we shall be to-morrow, even if we live; neither will our belief of to-morrow be exactly the same as our belief of to-day. There is no rest in life; life itself is nothing but constant change and continued development. Why then shall we talk of eternal truth, unchangeable belief, something that never did or could exist? Why not get advanced ideas of things, of death, of love, religion, law, the state, and especially of truth? The genuine article is just as cheap as the plated kind, and it is more lasting.

It should not be forgotten, especially by reflecting men, that all that we acquire in this world, in our mental development, is *an opinion*. All we know, all we feel, and all that we ever can know, or can feel, is what *we believe*, what *we think*. We never know, and we never can know, what or how things are. We can only know what we think and *believe they are*. Men have nothing in their minds at any time but mere impressions and opinions.

People talk about facts and the truth, but they die finally—all men do—without ever knowing what the facts are or what is the truth. We think we get the truth in school, in the church, in the court, in the Scriptures, in the books we read, in the newspapers, and even in the almanacs—but we never do. That much is certain. We get from these sources, and from others like them, what other people think, and what they find it their pleasure or their interest to induce others to think. To state the case in another form: We are busy all our life with mere thoughts and opinions—sometimes our own opinions and sometimes the opinions of others. We should never lose sight of the fact that no man, no matter how positive in his statement, ever gives anything more than his bare opinion. That is all that any man can give at any time on any question—merely what he has learned in some way, what he thinks and what he believes. And yet to hear some people talk, a person would suppose that they actually knew everything! The truth is, if there is any truth, *we all know nothing*. Nothing is proved; nothing can be demonstrated. Even Abercrombie admits that we understand nothing.

But before we go farther in this discussion, let us consider how we acquire knowledge and how we ascertain the truth. Most people imagine that they get the greater part of their knowledge, if not the whole, from or through their senses, from what they see, hear, taste and feel. But in this position, if accepted as true, they would find themselves mistaken when they came to examine

the case critically and carefully. It is well known to all thoughtful and inquiring men, that our senses not only often deceive us, but that in fact they rarely if ever tell the truth. Does the horse that is frightened at a newspaper, or at a wheelbarrow in the street, see things as they are? Even when we see with our eyes, we get no information absolutely or directly; we get it from reflection and inference, solely by thought and calculation. In making our observations, we infer this and we infer that, just as we do in all cases where any matter of evidence is brought into question. And what we see in a landscape is the same as we see in a picture—little or nothing beyond shade, color and outlines. The picture gives us no adequate conception of size, form, distance, motion, time, or even material. Everything is flat and expressionless. There is really no prominence on any part of the page; the picture says nothing, does nothing, is nothing. To the eye, a small man appears as large in a picture as a bigger man would; and Ireland covers as much space on one map as Russia does on another map. Size in pictures, and distance on maps, depends entirely upon the scale that the artist follows.

All the ideas that we get from looking at a picture are purely matters of inference. Where the shading is heavy, we have learned to expect depressions in the surface, and where there are spots illumined, we look for elevations. But this is largely conventional; there is no necessary connection between shadows and valleys, or light and elevation, as they are found on paper. For

animals, and even for the uncultivated races of men, light and shadow have no value, no expression, in illustrations. A picture gives us some idea of relative size and tells us something about location in connection with neighboring objects, and but little more. What a picture tells us, a landscape also tells us, and there is very little difference between them in any essential respect. And what is said of pictures is equally true of maps. In fact, maps are pictures presented in the form of crude outline. Maps tell us something about relative situation, and very little beyond that. A picture presents a surface, with a certain amount of light and shade, and a landscape does nothing less nor more.

It should be noticed that it is not within the range of possibility for a picture or a painting to present an event. To do that requires time, and time does not enter into pictures. Pictures can present only forms, figures and shading. An event is the result of a series of movements following each other in regular succession. It is simply a growth, a development, and these are things that cannot be brought out with brush and pencil. We can see in a picture what exists at the present moment but we cannot see what has happened, and much less what is about to happen. A picture cannot show two events, or results, at one time. The effect of a picture is solely to suggest, and the same is true of words and signs generally. They simply remind us, and thus we are able to see very much that is not really in the picture. Pictures act upon the imagination.

It may be added that every reflection is a picture, in fact a transient, fleeting photograph. It is the result of a change in the reflecting surface produced by cutting off a portion of its light. Everything cuts off the light from other objects, to some extent; so it also reflects light from all of its surfaces, and hence it casts its shadows and leaves its impression upon everything exposed to view in its vicinity. A shadow is also a picture—one of the earliest and most original of the kind. It is a temporary impression left upon a body precisely as happens in taking pictures in photography. An eclipse is also in the nature of a picture. It might be observed that both shadows and reflections are not properly thrown; nothing passes from one thing to another in these cases. There is no connection in any case between pictures and the things presented.

HISTORY

And we come next, in this connection, to an interesting and important topic which we will consider under the name of History. What is history? According to the conception that prevails generally among the masses, history is truth in its sublimated form; it is biography and description spread out on paper, and finally bound in volumes for the greater convenience of the reader. It is commonly believed that above other

men the historian speaks the truth at all times, that he uniformly knows what he is talking about, and he is positive as to the accuracy of any statements that he chooses to make. He is a favorite of the Lord, and he could not tell a lie if he wished. But a careful examination into the matter will show that all such impressions are erroneous, and that the facts of the case are quite otherwise. An historian is just like any ordinary man, the difference between him and his neighbors, in the matter of qualities and qualifications, being solely one of degree. There are no men in all this world that are more than ordinary men, or really better in any way. An historian is not essentially different from a judge, and a judge is not very different from a constable, a justice of the peace or a sheriff of the county. They are all men, only ordinary men at best. Their offices add nothing to their height, breadth, or depth, or to their character generally.

An historian is fallible in his judgment, like other men; in fact no men can be found who are not fallible. The historian in what he writes and publishes knows little or nothing of his own personal knowledge. Everything comes to him second-hand; he writes, or he reports, merely what he has read in books, or possibly what he has heard people say. Substantially all the knowledge that any of us gain is secured in some such way as this. Even the case in court is decided wholly upon the evidence produced, which at best is *merely what somebody says*, and what finally the court happens to accept and believe. That is all

there is, not only of proof in court, but also of proof in history.

We imagine that the historian describes things as they really are, just as we imagine that the painter does the same thing when he puts an object on canvas. But in neither case are we correct in the impression formed. The painter does not even pretend to paint objects as they are. He paints them simply as he sees them, and *as he feels disposed to present them*, leaving out very many points that are important, and giving much shape and coloring to the picture that cannot be found anywhere in nature. He is governed not only by the bent of his own genius, but by the rules of his trade or art, and especially by the sentiments of that portion of the people which includes his patrons. It is with painting as it is with tailoring and dressmaking—the artist is expected to follow the fashion of the day, at least in important points, or leave the field. If patrons do not get what they want, they will naturally not want anything. A coat is made in one style at one time and in another style at another time. So it is with pictures—and, indeed, with everything else. As there is no true coat, no coat for all time, *so there is no true picture*. No picture is a reproduction of an object in any manner whatever. As already intimated, there is much in the picture that does not belong there, and much that does belong there could not possibly be found with any amount of scrutiny. Just so it is with every book of history that has ever been published.

For all practical purposes even the best of

histories are mere works of fiction. They are in all cases the work of an artist who presents his subject as he wants to present it, without any special concern as to the real character of the people described, or whether the incidents reported did or did not happen exactly as set forth in the volume. Historians, we repeat, are artists, and what they write is for effect simply, either to assail or defend some character, or to carry out some plan or to justify some opinion of their own. If historians wrote simply the truth, and were content to stop with that, we should have but one history on any one subject, because the truth, and the whole truth, having been told already by the first author, nothing more would remain to be said by some other author later on. But that is not the way things go in the domain of history. We have, as is well known, a great many histories covering the same ground precisely, and all are very much unlike. And why? Because each new author assumes that all the other histories treating on the subject in question are either untrue or incomplete, or perhaps both together. His own work, as he looks at the matter, is the only one that is reliable, while all the others must necessarily be unreliable. In fact, all that we get in any history is *some one's view of things*—merely how certain men see certain objects, or what coloring they give to certain events. Just so it is with pictures. Every artist presents merely his view of the subject before him. The pictures differ each from the other very materially, but the subject remains practically unchanged. The differ-

ence lies wholly in the artists and their methods of treatment. Christ, in the Middle Ages, the same for all, was painted by artists hundreds of times, but by no two of them alike. So much for art and imagination—they always go together. It is well known that no two stories ever agree. And how should they agree, when no two observers ever see alike, and some people do not see at all?

There is so much in the way in which we look at things and the results are so varied and so important in many instances, I deem it best to consider the subject still farther. Not only in painting and art generally, but in history as well, subjects are presented differently because they are seen by different men, with different eyes, at different times, under different circumstances entirely. It should never be forgotten for a moment that no two persons ever see the same object alike. One is more careless or more hasty and more superficial than another; one overlooks more points than the other, and perhaps the one is not so well informed as the other. Again, much of the impression formed in regard to a certain object comes from things remembered, and it is well known that some people have much poorer memories than others. For these and many similar reasons, people are seldom found to be in such a condition as to be enabled to see and understand the truth in any case.

Do we wonder that pictures and paintings come so very short of presenting objects in a manner that is in any way satisfactory? How could

the result be different? And in history again, what should we expect? How could it be possible that the many incidents noticed and the many facts related should prove to be presented precisely as they occurred? If men do not see or know the truth in the first place, how can they be expected to present the truth to others, either in history or in art? It is absurd to claim at any time that facts are ever presented as they are, or as they were. An approximation to the truth, more or less close, is the very most that should be expected at any time. What, for instance, was history in the Middle Ages? Buckle assures us it was mostly fable. Macauley as an historian did not even pretend to be accurate in any of his statements. His leading object was to attain an effect, and to him the precise truth was a subordinate matter. The historians of the Middle Ages, and of classical times, were simply artists and painters. They were bards who loved to sing, and they were not much concerned about the facts of their story.

We get in all cases from the historian just what we might expect from ordinary men generally under the same circumstances. We have no assurance that he ever sees correctly any more than we have that anybody sees correctly. We do not know either that he scrutinizes carefully or that he judges correctly. He writes from his own impulses, with his own personal objects in view, what happens to come into his mind. He is limited by the knowledge he has, or perhaps by the lack of it. He is limited also by his intellectual

gifts, or possibly by the want of them. He may write well, or he may write ill. His zeal, his imagination, and often his prejudices, may lead him astray, so that it could not be said that he presents anything as it really exists. And yet we consult history with the assurance that the bottom truth is to be found there! No greater error was ever incorporated in the belief of man. It is surprising to notice the facility with which people are led to believe what they hear, and to observe the slim foundation upon which their opinions are often found to rest. There is a striking tendency in mankind to believe all they hear and especially to accept everything that they see in print. As a rule the world is slow to discriminate, and the reason may probably be found in the fact that discrimination implies both observation and effort.

History is founded on truth—no doubt of it. Fiction is also founded on fact. There is a great deal of fiction in history, and a great deal of history in fiction. These two forms of literature have many points in common. Indeed, there is clearly no radical difference between them. Schopenhauer assures us that in all history there is more that is false than true, and many other writers have come to the same conclusion. Finally, what is fiction, and what is fact? It is hard to tell. Where shall we draw the line? Poetry is fiction; the Scriptures are known to be allegory chiefly. What shall we find that is not fiction, when the question comes to be duly and justly considered? It is a

just saying: "Anything but history—for history must be false."

We have many histories, and perhaps there is no man of any eminence that has not been fully and freely written up repeatedly in his life time. And yet what do we really know of the great men of the world, who, as we have intimated, have been dressed and undressed many times by famous historians? What that is accurate or reliable do we know of Socrates or Plato, or Julius Caesar, or Napoleon Bonaparte, or even our own George Washington? We know little, very little, of these men, and what we do know cannot be depended on. As to Washington, we do not know to a certainty, even at this late day, whether he could tell a lie or not. We do not know whether the father's cherry tree was hacked by George's little hatchet or by the hatchet of somebody else. Who can assert positively that little George ever had a hatchet, or that his father ever had a cherry tree? Historians are at variance on these as well as other points. When so much is said, it is not at all remarkable that so little is known, especially when even our best writers are so very reckless in the statements they make.

It has been said that history makes its heroes, and the statement is well founded. Indeed, if we had no history, we should have no heroes. History hunts up heroes, dresses them in attractive and interesting garb, and thereby gives them a character. Heroes without histories would have no character, no standing. They would not even exist. No man is pictured by the artist as he is.

No man is described in history or biography as he is. We never know what a man is; it is hardly possible that he himself knows what he is. A man's history, to be true, should be written and rewritten every week, for he is changed and transformed to some extent each succeeding day. A man at twenty or ten years is never the man we find at forty or sixty years. No man is known to more than a few people at best, and even by them he is known only partially and imperfectly.

We may paint a man hideously, because we are skillful in handling the brush. Or we may have a grudge against him, or possibly our vision is impaired and we do not see correctly. But what does all this prove? That the man really is hideous? Most assuredly not—we all know better than that. There are such exaggerations as caricatures—villainous or indecent things at best—but what do they prove? Nothing, save that there are fools and rascals in the world. Caricatures may hurt the feelings of the victim, but they never set forth a man's true character or appearance. So it is in history and biography; so it is in books of all kinds. There are good books and bad books, but it should not be forgotten that *none of them give the truth at all times and on all subjects*. It is no wonder at all that sensible men are beginning to see that we need a new kind of history, history in a new form and upon a new basis, history whose purpose it is to glorify the truth itself and to disregard the vanities of man. Above all things, what we want is history without adoration, for where we find adoration,

there *can be no truth*. We have had truth in abundance for the benefit of high society and great men. Now let us have truth as it is and as we find it in common everyday life.

There are various sources of error in all that we utter and all that we publish. We are liable to find things misrepresented in the statements that are given us. We may be careless in our observations, and perhaps we are not sufficiently instructed in the premises to be enabled to see and understand things properly in the first place. At best we may have seen our objects at a disadvantage; we usually get nothing but instantaneous views of the things that come under our observation. We never see anything but the outside of objects, and even then we ordinarily see them at a distance. But beyond all this there are other sources of error, some of which are more important in their results than anything that we have yet noticed. There is, for instance, the matter of interpretation:

Everything that is presented to our mind or that comes before our eyes has to be interpreted before it can be understood and appreciated. That is a matter wholly for the observer or the reader, and the writer or artist himself is entirely powerless so far as insuring a correct interpretation is concerned. No matter how we paint, what we write nor what we publish, we never can tell in advance how our production will be accepted and

understood by the public. It must not be forgotten in continuing this inquiry, that every picture and every word is merely a sign put forth to call up thoughts and impressions in the mind of the reader or observer; and it should also be remembered that the same picture and the same word never call forth exactly the same idea in the minds of two different individuals. No man can ever know how he appears to other people, and most assuredly he never can decide beforehand how his utterances will be received by those who constitute his audience.

But the greatest amount of error and misunderstanding is to be found in *the interpretation of words*. And the reason for such a result is not difficult to ascertain. Words really express nothing in themselves; they are simply conventional signs used at certain times with a certain application, by the common consent of those who read and those who write. The notes and signs in music are just as meaningless and just as arbitrary as words are, and they are used substantially for the same purpose. So there is no true expression in a picture or painting, and it never has the same effect upon all observers. It all depends upon who does the interpreting and how it is done. It is in itself merely so much shade, color and form presented as a picture in our way. The Greeks had another way, the Egyptians another, and the Aztecs, of Mexico, still another. How any of these paintings or sketches appear, depends very largely upon how the interpreter understands them. It might be noted here that

pictures originally gave the figure in outlines, as our maps do; color and shading, as well as perspective, were things that came into notice at a later day.

The matter of words and their interpretation deserves still further consideration. As already intimated, words have absolutely *no meaning or expression of their own*. They may mean one thing or they may mean another. It all depends upon such an uncertain and arbitrary influence as usage—usage and the context. As we all know, and as any dictionary would show, words mean a great many different things, or rather they have a great many different applications—which, by the way, is a sure indication that they have no definite meaning at all. For instance, a *way* may be a street or a manner; and *right* may be a privilege, or it may be opposed to wrong. So we speak of the sweetness of sugar, of an apple, of song, of dispositions; *light*, not dark, and *light*, not heavy, words as different in their application as words can be. In music, a note standing alone has no value. The note *A* of one octave is as different from the *A* of another octave as any two notes can be.

Is it any wonder that one man reads one thing in a book, and another reads something different, on the same page, all depending upon education and interpretation? Is it a wonder that one judge on the bench decides this way, and another decides that way, with the same evidence before him, and on the same question? It is wholly a matter of temperament, interest perhaps, and in-

terpretation. And we use words so indefinitely, and with such a variety of meaning! We speak simply of a book. What book or what kind of a book? Is it an octavo, or a quarto, or a mere primer? Is it a bank book, a blank book, a racing book, or a song book? Words that mean many things mean nothing.

Is it not a very great wonder that we ever fully understand the contents of any book? The fact is, we never do understand it as the writer himself intended. Undoubtedly as long as time lasts, write what we may, one man is liable to interpret it one way, and another man quite differently. We know it is so with laws, and it is so with the Scriptures. Is it not more or less so in every case where we use words or signs to convey thoughts?

There is more in the matter of interpretation, in the affairs of life, than many people suppose. Everything has to be interpreted before it can be appreciated. Even the food we consume has to be assimilated before it can become a part of our system. Those who know are able to interpret what they see, and those who do not know cannot interpret at all. Interpretation is a matter of knowledge and capacity. Many people gaze upon a Middle Age cathedral and see nothing in the structure but an immense pile of material. For them it is simply chaos. It does not follow that because people speak English, they can understand all that they read in that language or can appreciate all the objects that come under their notice while traveling in English speaking

countries. Many English words have to be interpreted for English readers precisely as if the words were Russian or Hebrew. How many people, intelligent people, have no just conception of the meaning of such common words as *idea*, *subject*, *object*, *realism*, *compunction*, *complaisance*, *depose*, *desecrate*, to say nothing of a host of words found in ordinary professional works!

The true nature and force of language is best illustrated in telegraphic codes, where not only may one word serve in the place of another word, but it may even represent a phrase or a whole sentence, or indeed more than one sentence. It is evident enough that there is absolutely no meaning or expression in a word; that lies wholly in the mind of the interpreter, or of the one who makes the application of the word or combines the words in the sentence. So in the case of messages, the key being a matter between the one who sends and the one who receives the despatch. The case is precisely so in ordinary language. Everything depends upon the one who reads, or the one who listens—upon his knowledge, his attention, his power of appreciation. Clearly enough, all language, is simply a matter of signs, and their interpretation depends upon the key. The question is, how words are *used*, not what they *mean*. What we read, we interpret, we assimilate; we translate the words of other people into our thoughts. Those who cannot assimilate, cannot learn.

Before closing the subject of History, there are certain other phases that it may not be amiss to consider. A new history does not mean necessarily that a new subject has been presented to the public. What it really does mean, very generally, is a new view, by some new writer, on the same old subject. The subject does not change in any respect; the change lies wholly in the artist himself. What we get in history, when we come to a new book, usually, is what we get in the sciences, and in treatises generally, simply an accumulation of new notions paraded before the public by some ambitious student who is either anxious to obtain money or is an aspirant to greatness. Such views, like other views on other subjects, are merely for the time being, and at no distant day they will give place to something more novel and more interesting. It may be observed that it is not history alone that is made up wholly of opinions. Science and philosophy are established upon a similar foundation, and we find nothing but opinions and views, no matter what book we may happen to take into our hands.

In all writings, as in pictures and delineations of every kind, we get nothing but the thoughts and conceptions of man. We do not get original facts but mere impressions in every instance. Indeed, where shall we find the truth? *It is never found.* Consider what history, poetry, sculpture and sketches really are. They are never the truth, save to a limited extent, and what we do find comes in a very indirect manner. By those who

know, these presentations are never pretended to be literal truth, or trustworthy copies of things in nature in any just sense. We get the views of the writer and we learn his feelings and sentiments on the matter in question—and but little more. It is here as it is in the case of a portrait. We find the subject presented simply as some one sees him. Another artist would present an entirely different picture of the same subject at the same period of time. And so it is in history. In every case where we get new books on old subjects, we get only the views of some new prophet. The description, the dress, is changed, but the subject remains as before. The hat does not affect the wearer in the slightest degree. It can be taken on or put off, and still no change occurs. It is so with the sentiments or descriptions found in books. They change nothing, effect nothing. An author always writes what is on his mind, and he does so chiefly to be relieved of the burden. It is so, too, with the painter in his paintings and the engraver in his sketches. A painter has the subject sit for him, not to give him new facts, but a better idea of the face and form that he is about to put on canvas. The painter colors his own picture; so do the historian and the poet. They all deal with their own conceptions solely.

There is no literal truth in history, as there is none in poetry and allegory. The ancients did not pretend otherwise for one moment. They had gods, it is true, as we have gods to-day, but the intelligent portion at least of their population never imagined that gods were made of flesh

and bones and viscera like ourselves. They wrote history, but they understood very well that they were only following sentiment and tradition. Speeches by orators and heroes were repeated, but no one supposed that as they were written so they were delivered at any time or in any place. Plato wrote, as Homer sung, many things that he assumed that other people said. But who believes that other people really said them as they are written? There is more fiction in history than is commonly supposed. People never know the facts when they get them, and it is rare, if ever, that they get the facts.

People generally have a strange misconception as to how history is written. They speak of the performance as if it were all one act, while it is really a piece of mosaic or patchwork. Perhaps they imagine that the author merely said: "Let there be light, and there was light." But evidently such an impression, so far as it exists, is based on error. We venture to say no man ever wrote history in any such a simple and expeditious manner as this. It is never dashed off hurriedly as might be done with a sentence or a word. Even an ordinary picture is never painted in any such off-hand way. Only one picture is painted at a time; indeed, it is only an insignificant portion of a figure that is painted at one time. Even the hand has fingers, and the fingers joints and nails, and these are always sketched and painted one at a time. How could it be otherwise?

The historian has much the same experience as other artists. He, too, can present *but one thing at a time*. Perhaps it is a battle that he sets out to describe. He cannot do it all in one moment, or with one stroke of the pen. He could not even if he were a god. He must begin at one point and take one thing after another in regular and natural succession. All work, by nature or man, must be done in this simple and elementary manner. One thing is all that any artist can have in mind at any one moment; and while he is busy with this, he is necessarily oblivious to everything else.

Moreover, the historian never writes what he sees. Even if he has seen what he describes, he must still write from his memory only, or from the memory of some one else, for the battle, no doubt, was long since ended. The historian, as already intimated, does not write facts. He writes merely what is on his mind, and his chief effort is to get it off at the earliest moment practicable. He takes one event or incident at a time, on some part of the field, and so he continues till the story is completed. And when it is all done, what we have is merely a story, just as if written or told by some other person. It may be wholly true, or partly true, or possibly not true at all. Who shall ever be able to ascertain exactly how it is? Indeed, who will ever care? If the story is interesting, who will trouble himself to inquire whether it is also true? *Is anything true that is written?* Surely, we know of a certainty that much that is published as truth is not truth, and never

was. The historian, it is conceded, writes a great many things that nobody has ever seen. Nobody has ever seen or noticed the causes of the conflict described, or the motives of the actors, or the connection of events. All these, and many other things, never appear on paper, nor in any other place save the mind or imagination of the writer. He portrays things merely as they appear to him, in his own style, and with a success that is limited solely by his ability and genius.

It is one thing to know a fact, and another thing to appreciate it and bring it home to us in every-day life. We all know a host of facts that we are in the habit of ignoring. We are often forgetful or indifferent, and sometimes both. So we know very well that history does not paint the world as it is, but this knowledge we usually fail to apply in practice. People know—intelligent people know—that nothing is ever painted as it is, either in words or in colors. A few objects are presented to the eye here and there, not as they really are, but as the artist fancies they are, or as he prefers to present them. It is not possible to present the whole of things at any time, with either pencil or pen. When we see the whole of things, as we see the sun, moon and stars in the heavens, we really perceive nothing,—nothing at least that is definite or intelligible.

What is it, ordinarily, that makes history interesting or attractive? What is it that is placed

most conspicuously on the pages of history? What is found there most frequently is the record of slaughter, supplemented by harrowing pictures of war and its horrors. The historian, who is generally a man of affairs, understands very well what sort of pabulum the public craves. In America particularly, the writing and publishing of books is usually a business transaction. The publisher has an eye exclusively to the money that he imagines he sees in the venture; and the writer, being human like other folks, has ordinarily the same object in view. As to the public, all that it wants is to be edified and amused, no matter what the entertainment costs. If it does not find time to read the books, it wants something at least that looks well on library shelves.

Indeed, what shall we assume to be the purpose of history? What is the primary object in view? Shall we say that its aim is to enlighten the people? Does it in any way serve to make men better? History might indeed do this—the right kind of history might—but such history as we have is seldom known to produce any such results. History as it is usually written, and tradition, as history appeared in the early stages of the world, has for its chief purpose to glorify a few individuals, and through them to exalt the race, or the nation as a whole. Thus, the French boast of Napoleon, because Napoleon stands for France.

A history of all the people never seems as yet to have been dreamed of by any author. In fact, it would be quite impossible. History is for

the great, and for those who wish to be called great. How can we paint or describe the whole people, when it has no character or outlines as a body, and even no record of its own? Individuals alone can be painted or described, and even these are presented in a very crude and imperfect form. The individual, it will be remembered, is himself a whole made up of innumerable parts.

History, viewed in one of its aspects, is the tribunal before which man's claims are brought for adjudication. It is very much in the nature of an ordinary court. However, it is self-constituted, and in the fullest sense of the word a one-sided affair. The historian is practically "the whole thing." He hears all the evidence and he decides what is and what is not evidence. When he is ready, he renders his verdict, whatever that happens to be. This is in accordance with how he sees things and how he happens to feel at the time that the decision is made. And so it is with courts generally. In due time the verdict appears in print and finally it comes out in book form. That settles the matter for all time. People have a great regard for what an historian writes, especially when they see it in print. What would the Holy Bible have amounted to, if it had not appeared some hundreds of years ago in the form of a book? Even the word of God amounts to nothing unless it is put in portable shape so that it can be conveniently carried about.

There is no appeal from history; the writer is not supposed to be amenable to any higher authority. It may be proved that the author is mis-

taken, but that makes no difference. Mistakes will occur in the best of families. That a story is stated one way in one book and another way in another book, proves nothing. How shall we ever know which view to accept and which to reject? This shows what history is—*merely what somebody says*. However, people should not be too particular about what they see in print. There is no law to compel them to believe all they read. Truth, it will be remembered, is, in practice, largely a manufactured article; it is not a natural production, as many have been led to suppose it to be. Truth identifies itself with history, which, as we know, is simply what somebody says. When a statement appears in print, it assumes the crystallized form, and after that it changes very slowly.

As we might expect at this late period of the world, when civilization is taking on new phases, history is beginning to take a new shape and to appear under new conditions. Much of what might be called current history appears to-day in periodicals and newspapers. Indeed, it is hard to draw the line between what may be called history and what may be called news. Or is all history news, and is all news history? But we will not undertake to decide this question now. It has never yet come to a decision, and perhaps it never will. So long as editors find it profitable to publish history, no doubt they will go on publishing it in place of news, as they have been and are doing; and doubtless historians will go on publishing news in place of history, just to return the compliment, and perhaps make a little

money. It should not be forgotten that history has many forms and phases. Tradition, romance, eulogy and myth all help to give a lively coloring to many of its pictures.

But it would seem that those who edit newspapers, as well as those who publish history, should have chiefly in view the instruction and improvement of the masses. Yet, it must be confessed that much of what appears in our journals and histories of the present day could never have been published with any such purpose in mind as this. There is certainly nothing very instructive or elevating in the usual records of slaughter and crime, or in the published reports of suicides or defalcations, or the sickening evidence of divorce cases. Newspapers, like books, are made to sell, and whatever ministers to the vanities of the people, or that serves to satisfy the thirst for the scandalous and monstrous, is sure to be carefully collected and promptly put in print. A large portion of what now appears in books and newspapers is printed with a view to satisfy that morbid curiosity which is the prevailing weakness of civilized races. Curiosity is a feature that is found chiefly in modern civilized life, and it is noticed that it is something that rarely disturbs the equanimity of the savage. Curiosity leads man to do much that brings him no compensation whatever. From mere idle curiosity, and with no promise of either reward or advantage, people will explore the depths of some ancient graveyard, or remove the *debris* of some lost or forgotten city, hoping to find some rare piece of ruined pottery, or

possibly some interesting fragment of old-time statuary. Curiosity is not a bad thing, but it is a source of diversion that may be, and often is, carried to distressing lengths.

It may be added in this connection that through history the present age is bound to the past as to the body of a dead man. We, the descendants of our ancestors, are passed down to posterity, as an inheritance, with the rest of the testator's property. We are even liable for the debts that the old people failed to pay. We inherit the debts with the property. Was there ever before a conception more absurd or monstrous than this? Once a slave, always a slave—and we are weak and silly enough to subscribe to that antiquated doctrine! We are not even concerned about our emancipation; things are believed to be right as they are, or rather as they were. And so we remain tied to the past as we have been all along. The past gives us law, government, philosophy, religion, everything! We must worship our ancestors; what they may have said or done is right, even when we know very well that it is just the opposite that is true. It is wicked to speak disparagingly of the past, because it is a reflection upon our ancestors—*de mortuis nil nisi bonum*. Worship of ancestors! How much money and time is wasted in that childish pastime! The true way is to look to our ancestors for no inheritance, and then we shall incur no obligation. The soundest of all doctrines is to owe no man anything, and to keep at all times “free from entangling alliances.” An alliance even with the Al-

mighty himself is something that could hardly be recommended.

It is time for us to have new ideas of the use, purpose and proper place of history. Prof. Eucken says with truth: "History lies upon man like an Alp; it works toward confusion, deadness, untruth; it robs us of our own and gives to us another's life instead. * * * "History holds man fast; he cannot shake it off through some sudden resolve. He must arrange with it; only history itself can free him from history." It is bad enough to be mortgaged in any case, but worst of all, it is, to be mortgaged to the dead. It is a fiction even to suppose that there can be any obligation to the dead. The death of a person naturally and necessarily closes all of his accounts. If we have not done all that we could or should do for him before death, it is too late after that event. All homage is a waste of attention, as everybody knows. The chief duty that should concern the living refers to themselves; at least it will be but a short time before they also will be numbered with the dead. Such is life. Honors, like sacrifices, are for the living only—*always for the living*. There should be no mistake about that matter. If we wish to be kind to our friends, to-day is the time. To-morrow it may be too late.

The living take the world as it is found and as it is left to them. It is a heritage that comes to them in the natural course of things. Whether things might have been done better by our ancestors or not, is a matter that it is quite too late to inquire about at this time. The sole question is,

how much better will the business be done by ourselves? Most of the time that we spend turning over the leaves of history, especially ancient history, will be found to be misspent. If time weighs heavily on our hands, history might be read for diversion, and it is rare that it should be read for any other purpose. A synopsis of history is all that the most intelligent should ordinarily desire. In fact a man should read history just as far as it serves his special purpose, and no farther. He should remember that history is something that he can read at any time. If it happens to be facts and details that he is interested in, he should remember that it is rare that they will be found in a reliable and satisfactory form in any book. We know indeed that books often disagree on material points, and hence it is that history has to be written and rewritten every few years. Some of these books at least must be wrong.

It has already been seen that what is true and right at one time is not necessarily true and right for some other period of the world's history. Truth and justice as we have it are only for the time being. These are always things for the world in a particular stage of its existence. It cannot be just and fair to govern men according to rules and laws laid down by those who lived and died hundreds, and perhaps thousands, of years ago. *Every age should live upon the ideas of its own time.* Any people that conducts its affairs under rules of life based upon the philosophy of a former age is sure to make a failure of its undertaking. We have ourselves seen how it works, in practice at

this late day, to live under a government founded upon Jewish history and philosophy, with a jurisprudence built upon old Roman law. Who shall undertake to estimate, even approximately, how much misery and injustice humanity has endured already as the legitimate consequences of trying such a hazardous experiment as this?

APPEARANCE VS. REALITY.

Are the things real that we see about us, engaging our attention and arousing our thoughts every hour; or are they merely "a fleeting show to man's illusion given"? The question in this case is old, very old—older than the pyramids, and as old at least as civilized man. The question has been repeatedly asked, and it has been discussed indefinitely in the past; but never has the debate been taken up more earnestly by thinking men than at the present day. Are things substantial and lasting, or are they like the ghosts of the graveyard, liable at any time to vanish into thin air? The question has been asked and asked again, and still it is being asked, but the problem remains, just as it has remained for thousands of years already, without a solution. We have, however, gotten so far as to appreciate the fact that there is truth on both sides of this question, or in other words that there is truth in the claims of the Idealists and truth on the side of the Realists, both

at the same time. But beyond that, on this problem, the world has made little progress that can in any sense be considered satisfactory. We are completely at sea, as the profound thinkers of all lands have been all along. However, it seems to be a fact that the preponderance of talent and thought is largely on the side of the Idealists, the side where the shadowy view of things prevails.

It is highly important that we should have correct views and accurate information on all subjects that concern us, even on such distressful metaphysical questions as the one now before us. All thought comes under the head of metaphysics and the question under consideration here is not in any sense more metaphysical than others. Error and ignorance on the topics of the day, especially on matters of general concern, are certain to lead to misfortune and mishaps at last. When people are on the wrong road, they certainly are not on the right one, and the farther they travel the more doubtful and more dangerous their route is sure to become. Before their journey is finally ended, something decidedly unpleasant or unfortunate in its consequences is quite likely to occur. It is astonishing how reckless we are in what we believe and what we assert. We have the same weakness in this country that is common in Germany. They call it *schwatzen*—talking too much without thinking. We get an impression into our heads, and we never suspect for a moment that our beliefs and theories may be entirely wrong. By the way, most of the vanity that prevails among men is occasioned by misunderstandings in the

first place, and by impressions formed that are not founded on truth. Mistakes are uniformly serious matters, but ordinarily few people regard them as such. Men have their own theories and notions, and they cherish them with unbounded devotion. That is the reason why people are so slow to learn, and why so little progress is made in what may be called true knowledge. Who shall estimate the miseries that have come to this world from the unfounded beliefs of man? Most of our sorrows may be traced to that source. Whether we have sustained a loss or not in a business transaction depends solely upon the question how we look at things, and how we make the figures. Compared with last year it may be a loss, while compared with some other year it may be a gain. Most of our losses are imaginary, and so it is with the causes of most of our sorrows.

That we exist, there seems to be no cause for doubting, and for all practical purposes there is a world outside of ourselves. We know something of ourself, but what do we know, and what can we ever know, of the world outside of ourself, with which we never come in contact and are never brought into connection in any manner? It is evident enough that we never get a complete or correct idea of any object. When we see the moon, we do not see it as it is. We only see one side of it, and the moon in one of its phases. We see merely a little light and shadow. How shall we ever know what the moon is? We never see things as they are, for we have absolutely no means of knowing what they are in the first place.

We get some sort of impression, correct or false as the case may be, and with that we rest entirely satisfied. We observe things, we notice a certain number of points, and we group them together in our mind; then we reflect somewhat, make our estimates and calculations according to our ideas in the case, and that ends the business with us for all time. We seldom go farther, and that is the way that people usually conduct their inquiries and reach what they call their conclusions. But is this the truth? Is this all there is of truth? How shall we ever know? How shall anybody know? Certain it is, no one in this world ever does know. There is no proof that is accessible in any case—there is no such thing as demonstration.

Are our ideas real? There is no doubt of it—they are the only things that are real, for us. But as to the objects about us, and how far they come toward meeting all the conditions of reality, there is abundant room for doubt. We see things, we hear things, we feel things, we think of things, but as to where they are or what they are, we are always left more or less in doubt. We know what we think they are, but that is quite as far as anybody has thus far been able to go in solving the riddle. We often find ourselves in error. We frequently mistake a five cent piece for a quarter; we never can tell with any accuracy the size, distance, shape, or even the color of objects generally. A stump at a little distance, especially in a fog, takes the shape of a monster. In the wilderness, when people are out in search of game a friend is frequently shot down on the belief that he is either

a deer or a bear partly concealed by foliage. In the Arctic regions, Peary's men, one morning, imagined they saw reindeer in the distance, but the Esquimaux, more trusty observers, assured them that the moving objects were men, and not reindeer, and so the fact proved to be. We make our pictures in our mind, just as the painter puts his conceptions on canvas. How often people think they see what they do not see! Some are able to see God in clouds, and others can make combinations of what they do see and thus develop new figures that they really do not see. We at all times simply see what we believe or imagine we see, and we never see anything else. Our illusions are as real as anything in our experience. We feel for ourself—we cannot feel for others. We never could see what they see and as they see it, until we actually stood in their places and used their glasses. Luther saw Devils, and the ancients saw gods aiding them in time of battle. The state of a man's mind, and his early education, have a great deal to do with the shape and coloring that he gives to objects. There are a thousand views of any and every object, and all of them depend upon the point from which they are taken. No object has any expression of its own; that depends entirely upon its surroundings.

Do we always see a tree when we think we see one? Most assuredly not. Do we always see a man when we imagine we see one? Certainly we are oftentimes mistaken. The figure may be only the semblance of a man; it may be a woman dressed in man's attire. So it is in all cases, we

see only what we believe we see. When we think we see a tree, we see only what recalls such an object to mind. It may be only a painted or pretended tree. A word, a picture, a shadow, or a hieroglyphic would answer the same purpose. The office of each and all these devices is merely to suggest something to the observer. How shall we ever be able to say that we really see things? In our minds certain spots on the face of the moon grouped together resemble human features, and the conclusion we arrive at is that there is a man there. Some notice a group of stars in the sky and imagine they see the form of a dipper. And yet we all know that in this, as in thousands of similar cases, the error comes from indistinctness of observation. We can see in many cases what is or has been, but can we ever see the sequence, something which follows, but which as yet does not exist? Can we see a result or a conclusion before we reach it?

But whether things outside of us are real or not, our thoughts, our visions, our dreams, are unquestionably so, at least for ourselves. If we do not see things in our thoughts, dreams and remembrance, most assuredly we never see them at all. What is the difference between actually hearing things and merely thinking we hear them? When we think we hear things, we hear them, and when we do not think we hear them, unquestionably we fail to hear them. So we see things when we think we see them, and never at any other time. It is not the thing before us that we see, but the

things that are pictured and treasured up in our memory.

There are plenty of things that certainly exist and yet they do not affect our senses. All the objects around us have some kind of qualities—these objects are sweet, sour, hot, cold, high, low, large or small. In fact, things are known by their qualities or attributes, and if they had no qualities, they simply would not exist. But attributes or qualities are not things to be seen or felt; in fact, they do not exist at all independent of the objects which are supposed to possess them. Sweetness, coldness, heat, size, time, motion, are things not to be seen or handled. They are never observed floating in the air or skulking around in hidden places. They are in the mind of the observer, and not in the objects that are believed to possess them. Sweetness and coldness are not things that can be taken on or put off as people do with garments. Qualities, it is well known, are entirely and exclusively a relative matter, and not something with an existence properly its own. Things may be high and low, or hot and cold, at one and the same time—high compared with a dwarf, and low compared with a giant, or hot compared with marble, and cold compared with a furnace.

Whether all the things that we see are wanting in what is called an existence, still remains an open question; but that we see, feel, and think of things that cannot be said to exist on their own account, seems to be unquestionably true. We do not see God, yet we think and talk of God; we

do not see, and could not paint or represent in any manner, such things as sound, electricity, government, the state, beauty, reason, light, and a very large portion of the things that we talk about most frequently and most freely. It is quite evident that we see and feel in our thoughts a host of things that have no independent existence whatever. We see things in our dreams and imagination as really as we ever see them. So we see things that come up through memory. In fact we *never see things* at any time save *through memory*. A glance never enables us to see things; it is the impression always that we rely on. If we had no memory, could we see things? What good would it do us to see things that left no impression, and which therefore we failed to remember?

Things are kept alive in our thoughts and are preserved in our memory by means of signs—usually words, sometimes pictures and sketches, sometimes hieroglyphics, and sometimes sculptured figures. Quantities in algebra and numbers in arithmetic are represented by certain letters and figures, and they finally come to stand for things precisely as words and pictures do. A very natural result is that things used originally as signs become ultimately things themselves and they are so treated. So the sculptured marble merely representing Jupiter at first comes finally to be taken for the god himself, and it is so worshipped. Our Bible is worshipped by Christians in the same way, because it is supposed to be given to man by inspiration, and to be really the word of God is-

sued in book form by himself, for man's convenience.

How can we see things correctly and describe them properly when it is a fact, in most cases, that we have no acquaintance with them and they are forever changing? A century modifies the whole face of the globe, more of course in some places than in others, the destructive agencies not being earthquakes and storms alone, but the rains, the winds, the frosts and the floods. Everything is continually changing its form and appearance. How could we describe it or characterize it fairly? Nothing stands alone or disconnected. How could we describe it or picture it as something apart from the world? With all our efforts in that direction, it is certain we meet with only partial success.

We are constantly being deceived by appearances, as is well known, and yet appearances are the main thing that we depend on in all the affairs of life. In fact, appearances are almost the only thing that most people care for. If they can only keep up appearances, they imagine that that answers the whole purpose. We call an animal a fox because it resembles a fox. We see a bird flying, and we call it a hawk, when we find on closer inspection that it is a dove and not a hawk.

Most people imagine that they must call things by some name and give them some character, even though they are obliged to confess that they know nothing about them. They think that the wrong word is better than no word at all, and so they go on wholly at random, and talk as they

please. A creature may look like a horse, at a distance, and still it may not be a horse. It may be a cow, or a calf, or possibly only a pig. People do not usually take steps to ascertain the truth in such cases, because it is too much trouble. At great distances, and especially in the night time, all things are apt to look alike. In such cases it is better to say nothing, and by so doing people will avoid exposing their ignorance. It very often happens that we cannot tell a solid from a liquid, ice from water, or the hard rock from a coating of snow. We do not know whether the object noticed is a mile off, or only a quarter of that distance; and still we are ready to assume that we *always see things as they are!* Would it not be more sensible to inquire if we ever see things as they are? Thus, we notice an immense building in our travels. How shall we know what it is, or what to call it? We shall have to inquire. Our eyes will not tell us, no matter how acute or how perfect our vision. Our nose will not help us, neither will our ears or our tongue. The only way to get at the truth, in this case, is to appeal to outside sources, and even then we are liable to be misled or mistaken. The building may be a convent, it may be barracks for soldiers, it may be a prison, it may be a fortress, or it may be a palace.

Appearances alone will often deceive. Sometimes a telescope will help us, and sometimes an opera glass would do better. Sometimes nothing would be of avail. We must often grope our way in the dark. But what is foolish on our part is

to pretend to see when we do not see. Ignorance is always inconvenient or disagreeable, but it is not always disgraceful. There are many things that even the wisest of men do not know. Some things it seems impossible for anybody to learn. After all, ignorance is to be preferred to willfulness. Why not come out candidly, confess our ignorance, and done with it? We may thus have the sympathies of the people, if not their esteem or admiration.

As a general thing, so far as the seeing of objects is concerned, when we observe them, we usually see things as *we* happen to be, and in accordance with impressions which we ourselves may have formed. Things appear beautiful, not because they necessarily are so in themselves, but because they please us and are in accord with our notions of beauty. This, we may note, is a very different matter from seeing things as they are. Instead of seeing things as they are, most people after all see things as they themselves happen to feel. Two people who witness the same occurrence describe it differently, for reasons that are quite obvious. One observes one thing, and the other observes something else that is going on at the same time; one notices all that occurs, and the other is careless and inattentive, and hence overlooks many points that are important; in his feelings, one person favors one side as a matter of preference; and one is found to have a poor memory, while the other remembers what he sees exceptionally well. Events, as is well known, are made up of a great many occurrences, and no ob-

server is able to see and appreciate them all. Is it any wonder that the two give an entirely different account of the same transaction? We should not expect any two men to paint alike. Is there any reason why we should expect any two men to write or narrate alike? To witness an occurrence is precisely like looking at a picture; we may understand the performance and what it means, and we may not. That all depends upon how we are instructed, and how much we know. Every event or occurrence is simply a movement, precisely like any movement—a performance such as we see upon the stage. What difference does it make whether the show is real or merely make-believe? Every step taken is independent of any other step. How shall we proceed to connect the individual parts? How shall we interpret the drama, real or fictitious, as the case may prove to be?

No matter how near to an object we may be, no matter how carefully we scrutinize it, we never get an impression wholly from what the eye reveals to us. From the eye, or the senses directly, we learn very little. Before we reach our conclusion in any case, we make a hasty study of the features presented, and we quickly form an opinion. For instance, we see an object in the distance, and we ask ourselves what it may be. Is it a man or a woman, or some young person? Is it presumably A, B, or C? We look at the dress, the gait, the size, the motions, and finally we reach a decision—like all other decisions, either correct or false. The matter of distance we decide largely by the apparent size of the object, diminished more

or less from the ordinary size as the case may be; and the shape and form we determine in our mind by noticing the shading or coloring. It cannot be impressed too strongly upon the reader's mind that the eye alone gives but very little reliable information in regard to the tone, features and character of the object observed. It does not tell us either the distance, or the figure, or the dimensions. It determines the color only under certain conditions. We have to make an estimate on these and many other things before we can form an opinion that we can trust; and even then, with all our care and pains, we often find that we are mistaken. We see the sun, moon, and stars, apparently very plainly, as we have observed them from our youth down to the present time. But yet what single fact or feature do we really *know* about any one of these heavenly bodies? Do we know their distance, do we know their form, do we know anything of their history or character? They are supposed to be globes, but that they are so, is by no means certain. Surely our earth is not a globe. The moon appears to us as large as the sun, but we know it is not. The moon is in fact the smallest of the heavenly bodies visible to the naked eye.

As a rule we see but few features, few points, in any object; our mind is not capable of grasping many features at one time. We see a few things, while a great many other things just as important entirely escape our notice. When we meet people, we think we distinguish them by their countenances. Sometimes we do, when they are near, but

more frequently we decide from the gait, dress or manner, and often simply by the voice. We know people, as we recognize objects generally, not by observing them or scrutinizing them as a whole, but by certain simple signs. Really, we repeat, we never give our attention to more than one thing at a time.

All our impressions are the result of nothing but conclusions, formed by taking certain things into account, suppressing certain other things perhaps equally noticeable, and finally reaching our decision. We may not be conscious of the mental operation at the time, but it certainly exists in every case. With us *everything is inference*. We often get wrong impressions, not because we see wrong, or are deceived, but because we reason wrong and draw improper conclusions from certain premises. In other words, we fail to handle the evidence properly. Here is to be found the source of most of the errors that eventually come to be incorporated with our thoughts and belief.

Our minds, like our bodies, are always active; we are always conjuring up something, and it seems to matter little to us whether it turns out to be fact or fiction. We are always having convictions and reaching conclusions. We not only give character to things, both to those which we know and those which we do not know, but we are constantly doing the same thing for groups of objects.

But how can we rationally give a character to a group? Does a group have a character? Does a group actually exist? There are individual ob-

jects all around us. Is there something beside these objects, hidden away somewhere, and unseen by our eyes? For instance, there is a company of one hundred men. Do the individuals exist at the same time? It must be either one or the other—the company or the men. However, this intricate and important question has always been discussed, and yet a decision satisfactory to all has never yet been reached. We talk about the English as men, and then we consider their merits as a people. But where is the people, what is the people, aside from the individuals of which the whole body is composed? There is no such people apart from the individual Englishmen, and so there is no character in this case for us to consider.

There is no such thing in existence as a body, a group, a class, a company, a state, a society. We talk a great deal about such matters, as we do about a great many other things quite as unsubstantial, but it is *all the work of our mind*—pure moonshine at last. What we talk about in all such cases is ghostlike in character, being matters arising in the imagination of men and confined wholly within such boundaries. A state does nothing, a people does nothing, a company does nothing. All the work that is done in this world, in the state or out of the state, is done by *individuals*. Groups cannot achieve, cannot accomplish, because they have no aim, no purpose. Groups have no character, no qualities, and therefore we cannot describe them. We cannot even know them. We can talk about them, dream about them, as we do about other imaginary things, but that is as far as

we can go. We cannot paint groups. We can paint only individuals—and these *only one at a time*. We can characterize two men separately—one may be black, and the other white. But what shall we predicate of the two together, in the matter of color?

The question of plurals, as apart from things that are singular, is identical with the one we have just been considering under the head of groups. Where are the plurals, the things repeated, multiplied, increased, the things counted over and over again and still remaining what they were? Where are they found to exist? Only in the imagination of men, where not only pictures but all abstract and impersonal things have their origin. In language, the plural and singular forms are substantially one and the same thing; *books*, if it be anything, is only a form of the word *book*—nothing added to it and nothing different from it in any way. But, really, the word *book*, like other things, can have but one form, and that being the fact, neither *books*, nor any other word, can be an additional form. Of course there is no such thing as plurality, outside the thoughts of man. Things in practice cannot be counted twice. Things cannot be heaped up, at least a thing cannot, for it is all alone by itself at all times. Things cannot be increased; the moment a half pound becomes a pound—if it ever could—it would cease to be a half pound thereafter. Things cannot be diminished. When six becomes four, if it ever does, it ceases to be six. In reality things never change; they cannot even be extended. They may in

thought, but never in practice. The moment a thing becomes what a moment before it was not, *it disappears forever*.

And still we go on persisting, as we have done from the beginning, that we see and think only of things that have a substantial existence of their own! The fact is, undoubtedly, quite otherwise. It is our thoughts only that occupy our attention, but thoughts are not things, and they have no connection with things. Things do not produce thoughts any more than things produce statues, or pictures, or books. They may serve as an occasion for thought, to a limited extent, but beyond that they have no effect on the mind. The moment the mind begins with its thinking process, it goes on indefinitely without any reference to things in actual existence. With the help of a comparatively few words, which are nothing but mere signs of things, men go on and build up a mound of literature, which again is always mere thought. So in algebra and geometry, given a few unmeaning signs and figures and axioms, all being man-made, and operations go on in our mind unceasingly, and with wonderful results. Everything that is done in this world seems to be the work of men, and in all cases it is the work of the mind. Men are concerned only about the works of men; men know only men. No animal really knows any other animal but one of its class. It is impossible for any being to go outside of its own sphere.

Qualities, we know, are not things. They do not even exist. Qualities are merely things that

appear to us. We know that objects are not really hot. They only appear hot. They are not lofty, they only appear lofty. They are not round, they only appear round. Nothing ever proves to be what it appeared to be originally. Appearance is not reality, and it never can be. A room may be made to look higher and longer or deeper by certain arrangements made in the interior of the building, as we see in the ruined temples of Egypt to-day. Everybody notices that a lady looks tall in a long dress and short in a short dress. Appearance is merely one phase of things, and is only for the moment; as things appear to be at one time to one person, they do not appear at another time to another person necessarily. We imagine that the weight of a body is something fixed and determined, but it is not. It weighs less in water than it does in air, and less at the equator than it does at the poles. Location and surroundings determine weight, as they do other things.

As to matter, or the material of things, people think that it has some permanent characteristic or quality of its own. But matter is in fact only a formless thing hardly differing from quality in its ethereal nature. It is something of which things are supposed to be made, but it is not a thing itself. It is only matter so long as it is the material of which things are formed. We can talk about it and think about it. We can say anything about it that we choose, with perfect safety, and if we happen to make a mistake in our assumptions, nobody will ever know it, for everybody else knows as little about matter as we do—and that is simply

nothing at all. As much as this, we know, may be said of heat, sound, electricity, virtue, justice, reason, and pretty nearly everything else of this character. We can have the pleasure of thinking and writing about things a whole life-time, but it seems to be forbidden to all alike to know anything positive about their true nature.

Here it may be noticed that while one thing is never the plural of another, and things, as we have intimated, can never be repeated or multiplied, it is pretty generally conceded that there are no simple, single things in nature. When we see a thing single, that is merely a matter of vision, and what we see is merely *phenomenon* or appearance. A tree appears single, and yet we know it has an infinite number of parts; there are leaves, branches, bark, buds, blossoms, trunk and roots. They are not properly parts of a thing,—a part of a thing is not a reality, but an imaginary existence. Parts are properly distinct and independent wholes, as much so as anything can be. In many cases a branch, or even a leaf, or a root, may be cut off and put into the ground, and it will grow and become a complete tree. The same thing occurs in the lower orders of the animal creation, as the polypes, where a bud or a joint may be cut off and grow and become a new individual. A crab may lose its claw and a new one will grow in its place. This is strikingly and unpleasantly exemplified in the case of the tapeworm.

Everything is accustomed to appear single to our eyes, because we are in the habit of looking at it as a whole. We look at a cord in this way,

though we know it is made of strands. So we look at a vast army of men as a whole. A stream or current that flows by we regard as single, when we know very well that it is made up of a great number of lesser currents. Even a house, or a castle, we look upon as a single thing, though we know it is made up of an indefinite number of small but independent parts. It is the same with a tune, a sentence, a book, and indeed with anything with which we come in contact, or which we may have in our minds. *There are no simple, single or elementary things to be found.*

Every living animal must be made up of a certain number of subordinate parts. Every animal is and must be an organization, and where there is organization, there must be subordination. The animal could not exist without its various organs. Indeed, without them it would be no animal; neither could any of the organs exist without the body as a whole. The animal must live and move and have its being, and to meet that condition, it must devour and digest. To aid in doing this work, certain organs are indispensable. No animal could exist for any considerable length of time without a brain, a stomach, liver and a heart. But subordinate as these and other parts evidently are, they do their work on their own account, as if they were intelligent and independent existences.

Just so the state and society is an organization. The state could not do without its departments, and the departments without the state would be compelled to go out of business. But

here we see, as we see in nature frequently, one department, sometimes the executive, sometimes the judiciary, and sometimes the legislative branch, encroaching upon the domain of some other department, and either trying to set up in business on its own account or endeavoring to subsist at the expense of the state as a whole, without performing its proper share of labor. That one department should attempt to cast its own burden upon some other, is a very common phenomenon, not only in the state but wherever organization exists. In the human system, the organs of the body find it difficult to decide, apparently, what work in the way of secretion or excretion should be done by the liver, what by the kidneys, and what by the skin. It very often happens that one organ is called upon to do the work of another organ.

Bearing in mind what we have said as to how things are, and how they appear, let us dwell a moment on the proof and legal evidence by which facts are supposed to be demonstrated, and on which proof cases in court are decided either one way or the other. Is evidence in court materially different from ordinary testimony, and is it any more reliable than what is found in everyday life? *Not in the least.* Evidence in court is all hearsay, and like all such testimony, it depends very largely upon the feelings of the witness and his habits of correct observation. People are uniformly sure they are right, especially when they testify with their hands upon the Holy Bible. They take no account of the chances of their being

mistaken, either from weakness of memory or lack of due attention to what seems to be the minor points in the case. When such evidence is brought to the test, witnesses are often found to be seriously in error. There are too many things that people think they know but do not know.

The best evidence in this direction is given in *Current Literature*, October, 1907: Suppose a hundred people are asked from memory to indicate on paper how the six is marked on the face of ordinary watches, how many would be able to state or show the fact as it is? Very few would remember that the hour is not marked at all, the second hand having the place of IΛ. Want of correct observation in the ordinary affairs of life is remarkably common, and still most people have unlimited confidence in what they happen to learn from a mere glance, or from the most casual inspection.

Before closing this part of our inquiry, we will dwell more particularly, for a while, upon such subjects as Size, Distance, Time and Motion. These are matters that have become quite as important, in the course of mental development, as things that are known to be far more substantial. It seems, that everything, for us, begins with a thought and ends with a thought, and all we have and all we know at last is merely a thought. The moment we form an image or idea of a thing, it becomes real for us, and we treat it with full as much consideration as we would the most lasting or reliable thing in the world. Our ideas become

our idols, and we worship and adore them precisely as the ancients adored their images, which of course were only the embodiment of an idea. We consult our ideas, we trust them, we sacrifice to them, and we turn to them for counsel and direction. So we trust not only in God and the state, but also in our ideas of the sun, sound, electricity, gravity, justice, evidence, morality, education. We know they are for us only ideas, but they are our ideas, and we trust in them implicitly. So it is with time, distance, motion, and size. We know they are only conceptions or notions of ours, and that nothing that corresponds with them can be found anywhere in nature; yet we practically adore and idolize them, giving them a very large share of our thought and attention. We even dwell upon our age and count the days and years we have lived, as if it were really a fact that we individually had lived thus long, and so long only! It should be noted that the uncultivated races do not dwell upon their age in any such way. As a general thing they neither know nor care about their age. They take little note of time.

We know that size has nothing to do with the properties of bodies. A small dollar goes just as far as a large dollar—if it is only a dollar. An ounce of butter is butter just as sixteen ounces is, if it is only genuine. Nobody supposes that distance affects the character of an object in any manner or at any time; a horse is purely a horse, either at ten feet or a mile distant. And as to time and motion, the earth is the earth to-day, to-morrow and forever. It is simply the earth under

all conditions. So it is with words. Nothing could be more vapory or more imaginary than words, and yet what has a greater influence than words on the history and progress of man? How shall we be able to affirm that the material world, so-called, is more real, more potent, than things that are known to be spiritual and merely born of the imagination? Is it not a fact well recognized by thinking men that the spiritual world is rising in importance, in America as in other countries?

If things have sizes, they ought to have at least several sizes, and if they have form, they ought not to be confined to any one form. And yet what is the proper size or form of any object, a tree for instance? Has a tree any proper or peculiar size or form? Most certainly not, for it is continually changing what is supposed to be its form. Could the form of a circle or square be changed? What shall we call the proper form of a house, or of a mountain, or of a hippopotamus? The only real forms are geometrical forms—squares, circles, triangles, polygons. But where do we find these forms in our daily walks? We are supposed to find them in crystals, but we find even these to be anything but complete and symmetrical forms. So in the arrangement of branches of trees, there is always a plan, but it is never followed. The same is true of the types that are to be noticed in the animal creation. Does nature ever present a complete or perfect form, a circle, a square, a perfect cylinder, a globe, a cone, or a polygon, for instance? We are reminded of the beautiful and regular forms in

the flowers that we see, but they are never perfect, as a man's face is never perfect. There is always something apparently lacking, something awry, in whatever nature does. No two eyes, or two ears, or two sides of the face are ever symmetrical. How could they be, when they exist under different conditions and are different in their location? Perfect forms are confined almost exclusively to figures that are presented on paper or other surfaces. Symmetry may exist in our ideas, but not in the products of the earth. No two individuals grow up under like conditions, and so they *never have the same form*. Nature never seems to finish its work, and its productions are always growing, always developing, always changing. It is generally believed, and in the Bible it is stated that the world was made in six days. But there is evidently a mistake about that. It must have taken longer than six days. Indeed, the job is not yet done! As already intimated, nature has no plan—or at least it never follows one.

How can a creature, a man for instance, be said to have size, when he has no fixed or determinate shape of his own and is constantly varying in what is supposed to be his form? How large was Henry Clay? That depends upon many points. Perhaps he was not large at all. Is a man large because he is tall, or because he is broad or deep? Is he large because he has great weight? Iron is heavier than wood, but is it larger? It will be noticed that view the matter as we will, size is one of the most variable and uncertain of all things. Why talk about the size or shape of man,

or the size or shape of anything, a bridge, for instance? How shall we measure a man's size? Shall we measure his arms, his head, his feet and his legs? We would measure the tentacles of the cuttlefish and the tail of the alligator. It must not be forgotten that size at all times is simply and solely a relative matter, and everything depends upon the scale or standard followed. Size is something that merely appears, and it constantly varies. It is merely an idea that comes from observation and conclusions, and it is *never in things themselves*. Things, it is very well known, appear large to some and small to others. Size cannot be pictured, because it does not exist. If we wanted to represent a ball two inches in diameter, we could do so with a figure a quarter of an inch in diameter; and this same figure would answer as well for a ball two feet in diameter. Again, size implies extent, but to extend is to be at two or more points or places at the same time, which is impossible for any body. A body is a point, properly considered.

Quantity is identical with size. But do things have quantity? Does quantity affect their nature in any way? How much quantity does a leaf have, a book, a house, a river? How can we measure the quantity of things, of a fortress, or a moose, for instance? It is evident enough that quantity has nothing to do with things, as has been stated repeatedly. If there is quantity anywhere, it is in liquids and in things that have a liquid character. And even there the question is not changed; it is simply more involved. The

term size and quantity cannot apply to individuals; we cannot have more or less of anything. It must be all or none. It takes just so much to make a pound or a dollar, and the moment the least particle is added or taken away the pound or the dollar ceases to be what it was and quickly disappears. Nowhere in all the realms of nature do we find more or less of things or even parts of things. Such nondescripts do not exist. We know very well that in no case does size or quantity affect quality or character. No matter how much a circle or a square expands, its form always remains what it was. A square, large or small, always has four equal sides, and all circles have the same number of degrees, without regard to size.

Nothing comes up in our conversation, or in our writing, more frequently than matters pertaining either to time or motion, and yet who is there that can tell us what time or motion is, or where it is to be found? It certainly is not in things, nor is it connected with things—so much is beyond all doubt. Time and motion occupy an exalted position in our thoughts and receive a great amount of our most devoted attention. But what are they? *Nobody answers, because nobody knows.* Time and motion are never found in pictures. It is not possible to represent them in any way, because they have neither character, form nor substance, and they really do not exist. It is true that latterly we have moving pictures, but they are the result of manipulation and are simply an illusion.

Time and motion are not in things nor of

things. They are a sort of invisible vapor in which things are supposed to be immersed. The attempt is often made to give history in the form of a series of pictures, but it always proves a failure, because it is impossible to trace any connection between the pictures. They are clearly independent of each other and there is no connecting link between them. Such a failure as we have just indicated is most noticeable in those sketches by Hogarth which were intended to represent the progress of "marriage-a-la-mode." Indeed without the accompanying explanation, nobody would have the slightest idea what the pictures were supposed to signify. The idea of connection between things is a false one; nothing of the kind exists in nature, outside of the minds of men. If two things are connected, they would become one. Two things may be tied or linked together, but that is not connection.

If there is any topic that might properly be introduced under the head of truth, it would seem to be Education. It is generally supposed that we attend school and college to acquire knowledge, and that when we gain knowledge we secure the truth. But is it a common experience to find that knowledge and truth are one and the same thing? Are our learned men and professors the ones to whom we must apply for our regular supply of truth and wisdom? No, this can hardly be asserted as a fact. Truth is not like gold the prop-

erty of any individual, or even of any one family. It does not come under the head of goods sold and delivered, like common merchandise. However, we will not stop to discuss this question at this time, and what is to be said in connection with education will be introduced here:

It is coming to be well understood among thinking men that our educational system is wrong, and the chief reason why it is wrong lies in the errors of our religious belief. It is a remarkable fact that the mind of the child, as soon as it is old enough to listen and remember, is loaded to excess with creeds, dogmas and fictions, all of them, as a general thing, being the accumulated rubbish of former centuries. No effort is made to strengthen and develop the intellect of the child so that it may be enabled to ascertain the facts of the case, and form conclusions on its own account. On the contrary, everything in the way of belief is furnished to the learner machine-made and ready for immediate use. Why should not the pupil be left to rely upon his own judgment and form for himself such conclusions as are best adapted to his tastes and wishes? What really helps the pupil is what he knows and what he can do. It little concerns him what others know and what they can do.

As a rule, we spend our life time in unlearning what in early life we were taught amiss. Why should people not be content to remain helpless and dependent, when dependence is what is taught to everybody from the cradle up? What concern

should we have, really, about what other people believe, or what Aristotle or Plato believed, two thousand years ago or more? We are interested in that alone which we ourselves have learned and which we have come to regard as truth and propriety. We are all of us individuals, and it is absolutely impossible for us by any effort of ours to emerge from the shell in which we were originally imprisoned.

How could we expect to get truth into the head of the young man or young woman who has spent eight or ten years in school and college and has taken on a full cargo of the fictions and false notions that are usually furnished to the innocent learner by these institutions? As a matter of fact, all that the pupil should expect to learn at school is the art of education—how to read, write and cipher—leaving the science to be obtained as he progresses later on. Instead of being taught what things are, he should be left to inquire and find out on his own account how things are. Nobody eats so heartily as the one who has acquired an appetite. Let the pupil get a hunger for knowledge, and then he will learn readily. How things are, it must be remembered, in science, art and elsewhere, is merely a matter of opinion, and only a matter of opinion at last. And why is not one man's opinion as good as that of another man? I place but little value on education as we have it in schools, either ethical, religious or otherwise. Education is not something to be fed with a spoon, either to children or grown people. Let those who

want knowledge hunt and hanker for it in the first place.

What does education do, and what has it done for centuries past, to elevate and improve the condition of mankind? What has it done, *what is it doing to-day*, to promote the cause of truth? Its mission seems to be to teach not what people know, or what they have lately discovered, but what people were supposed to know, several hundreds or thousands of years ago. People at all times have adored the classics, and they adore them yet, for no other reason it would seem, than that they happen to be ancient. Worship of ancestors has long prevailed. For hundreds of years, and especially during the Middle Ages, the universities all over Europe were founded upon Plato and Aristotle—particularly upon the latter. The wise men of those days were very much like the wise men of the present day; they had few if any original ideas of their own, on cosmogony, psychology, and other important topics, and so they picked up their ideas here and there in such ancient manuscripts as happened to be accessible. The students of that period were expected to translate Greek and Latin freely, so that they might read the classics in the original. But what a waste of time and money! However, when people get into a bad habit, it seems to take them a long time to get out of it—and it might be added that it takes literary and professional men a longer time to switch off on a new track than it does any other class of individuals. When people are sure they are right, and everybody says they are right, it

takes an unusually long time to convince them that they are mistaken, and it is well known that some folks never reach that point in all their career.

If we have instructors in our schools and colleges, it would seem that they ought to teach what they themselves know. Instead of that they are accustomed to teach what they find in the text books, and only what is found in them. To teach what is not found in the text books, or what is contrary to the revelations found in these works, would be rank heresy, and of course it is strictly forbidden. Here it might be added that the ancients did not teach in that way. They had few books, or none at all; they had some manuscripts, but no text books as we use the term. The teachers in those days were like the Moslem teachers of the present day, talkers and reasoners, rather than instructors. They had no schools in our sense; they had disciples and followers, but no classes. In the courts of the mosques, even to-day, the pupils or students, usually grown persons, squat on mats and listen to the words of the one who does the talking. Sometimes they ask questions and engage in discussions with the one who acts as teacher. It might be noted that the Mahometans have but one text book, and that is the Koran. The Koran is also their book of fundamental law. Our Bible was also for a long time a book of law, but it has no such authority now.

The signs of a revolution in American thought, on this subject, are just coming to be apparent. The public as a whole has been too busy with other questions to give much attention or

consideration to our methods or system of education. Whether our people are following the worst or the wisest methods, in the work done in our schools and colleges, very few seem to have the time or the inclination to inquire. But those who read our leading magazines and newspapers containing advanced American thought cannot have failed to notice that there is *something doing just now on this matter of education*. Plenty of able and eloquent men have spoken out boldly in condemnation of the defective system of education, so-called, that prevails all over our broad land.

Not long since, Harold E. Gorst, of England, while addressing a body of educators in New York, took pains to declare himself the apostle of an entirely new system of education, one which, he said, would not kill the God-given gifts of the child, leaving in their place "a lot of useless book-learning." He believes in developing the natural gifts and aptitudes of the child. Our present system does not do this. It rather aims to crush out the thoughts and purposes that nature gave him. The plan of the schools is to develop uniformity and to destroy individuality as fast and as far as practicable.

Let no one suppose for a moment that the American people are going to worship indefinitely the educational calf as they are doing just now, and as they have been doing for half a century. No sacrifice is too great at present, if it is made for education—education and charity! It used to be the Church and charity, but latterly the church has been thrown very much in the shade, and the

Bible itself has become simply a back number. And really it is quite impossible to have more than one God, or one fetich, before us at a time. So we go on sacrificing and suffering for education, without any regard for the matter either of time or expense. We not only build school houses like palaces, but we equip them like palaces. Everything in connection with education is carried out on the same magnificent scale. We are reminded of the splendor of the temples of ancient times. The people pay the bill, and money is no object worth considering. It is stated that in England, and no doubt it is much the same in America, when a student has well-to-do parents, it costs about \$25,000 to get a promising and lively lad through college! But is the venture worth the outlay? Does it pay? Is the young man himself worth the money when he completes his course and is ready for business? Moreover, what particular business is the young man fitted for when all is said and done? I would certainly like to know. It should be noted that pupils are sent to school ostensibly to acquire knowledge. But who knows what knowledge is? Who is able to recognize it when he encounters it? As a rule, it is well known, that people never inquire what unquestionably is knowledge. They readily accept anything that is offered under that name, just as they do when anything is offered under the name of truth. The indifference of people in this direction is simply astonishing. Pupils are not taught to do things, for it is not assumed that they will ever be called

upon to perform manual labor. They are to live by their wits, while the parents are supposed to do all the work that may be necessary.

The leading problem for this world is not so much how to acquire knowledge as how to use it properly when it is acquired. But, unfortunately, it is a problem that seems to give both pupil and teacher very little concern. The chief aim of modern educationalists appears to be in the direction of athletics and physical culture. Just how much they may have in view beyond this, has never yet been clearly ascertained. It is quite certain, however, that under our present educational system, the virtues are not generally treated as matters of prime importance, and no great effort seems to be put forth to impress upon the young the duty of being either strictly upright or moderately industrious. Indeed, it is undoubtedly a fact that many pupils have imbibed the notion that by securing an education they shall be able to avoid the embarrassing conditions that are usually associated with a life of industry and uprightness.

The imperfections of our modern system of education can be seen to the greatest advantage by contrasting this system with the methods pursued and the lessons inculcated by the ancients, notably the Greeks, the Romans and the Persians. The teachings that prevailed among these peoples were entirely different in aim and object from those which are found in our educational institutions at the present day. The purpose of the ancients was

to have their sons grow up and become useful and worthy men. They aimed to have them as perfect in body and mind as possible. It was not their purpose to make learned men of their sons, but to render them at the same time honest, discreet and thoughtful. From the outset the sons always knew their places and they never failed in the performance of the duties assigned to them. They were always respectful to their elders, and to them they uniformly gave due homage and attention. They were not puffed up with conceit, and they were neither boastful nor proud. They were retiring rather than audacious, and modest rather than arrogant. They were taught to bear the ills and aches of life without murmuring. If there was labor to be performed, they never sought to relieve themselves of the burden by contriving some excuse or resorting to some maneuver. No well-bred boy in those days ever thought of being specially favored, because of either his beauty or his smartness.

The status of education in America is something quite exceptional. The prevailing notion among the people of this country is that every one should have an education, and yet what education really is, and what its chief purpose should be, has never yet, by them, been either ascertained or defined. The leading criticism against our colleges is that they have no special aim. There seems to be nothing in particular, in the way of education, that they have set about doing. But what can be effected through any agency without some

specific aim? It cannot be said to be the aim of the American college to make learned men of its students, or even to fit them for any special place in society. As a rule, the results bear no comparison with the time spent and the money invested. The activity is great in certain directions, but the achievement made is inconsiderable, and the general result is anything but satisfactory.

It might be noted, further, that in England, where, as is well known, education stands upon a much better basis than it does in America, there is great dissatisfaction with certain practices that prevail in their public schools and their colleges. In 1888 a paper in the form of a vigorous protest was signed by four hundred leading citizens and educationalists, including a hundred professors and teachers, seventy members of parliament, besides members of the nobility, clergymen and others. The paper states that young men of real capability, at the universities, are led to believe that the main purpose of education is to enable them to win some money prize.

The signers protest emphatically against such a misdirection of education, with the evils that necessarily arise from it. Under the prize system, they say all education comes to be uniformly of the same type. They also protest against examinations and they comment upon their evil influence. As episodes, they tend to neutralize the efforts of the best teachers. The pupil loses his own intelligent self-direction, and the teacher as well as the learner is more or less depressed by such a system

as this. A protest is entered against the waste that is involved in these oft-recurring examinations.

Thus far we have been discussing questions of truth. We have found that it is one thing at one time and another thing at another time; that it is one thing for one person under certain conditions, and another thing for another person under different influences. Truth is simply what men believe, and whatever affects their thoughts and opinions necessarily modifies their notions of truth.

What has been said of truth in this work would apply equally well to morals. There is very little difference between the two. What is true must be right, and what is false must be wrong. And what is right? Simply what men believe to be right—not what all men believe to be right, and just and moral, but what any man believes, or certainly what a number of men believe to be right and proper. There is no such thing as right for all men at every stage of the world. Morality is merely custom, as the word *mos*, from which it is derived, would indicate. It is what men believe and accept; there is no other righteousness or propriety than this to be found.

The best illustration of what morality and propriety really are, may be found in the notions about nakedness that prevail among people who dwell in cold climates. We have become very

strenuous, and even very unreasonable, on this matter. We ourselves have become accustomed to wearing a superabundance of clothing, and we are disgusted, even enraged, because we cannot induce everybody else to persevere in the same practice. The whole business settles down at last to this fact, that we uniformly want other people to do as we do, at all times and in all places, no matter whether the rule that we enforce does or does not agree with their reason. It is generally supposed that the leading motive that induced people originally to wear clothes was to protect them against the rigors of the climate. But strenuous and precise people go above and beyond that now. People must cover their shame. And what is shame? It is something, as we all know, that is different for different people. The case is the same as it is with truth—it is one thing at one time, and in one place, and another thing for another time and place. In the East, the women cover their faces in order to conceal their shame, and please their husbands; while in America, women expose their faces, and often the bust beside, for precisely the same reason. It should not be forgotten that everything that is done, or not done, in the matter of clothes, is done to please somebody—sometimes to please one's self, but generally to please some admirer. Our notions on the question of nudity are very elastic. It is a good thing, nudity is, under some circumstances, and a bad thing under other circumstances. It is just as you happen to consider the matter, and so

it is with all questions of truth, right and morality. Everything depends upon who it is and where. It must not be forgotten that everybody is naked when his clothing is removed. The sole question is, where the clothes are? Are they on or off?

And how was it with the Greeks, who were not savages, but were supposed to be the most enlightened people in the world? It is well known that the statues exposed to view everywhere, in the public places, were uniformly nude, with no attempt at covering or concealment for any part of the person. It is, however, well to bear in mind that the Greeks had forms that were healthy and perfect, and so they really had nothing that they were ashamed of or that they had any occasion to conceal. The case is quite different with the cultured people of the present day. With them a certain amount of concealment seems quite proper, if not entirely necessary. It is feared that many of them would not appear well in a state of nature. In the gymnasiums of Greece, where the multitude of every age and rank assembled, the young people were accustomed to go through their exercises completely freed from clothing of every description; and at the theaters the most beautiful young persons danced unclad before the eyes of all the Greeks. Phryne is reported to have bathed naked, at the Eleusinian plays, simply to please the crowd that had gathered to see the spectacle. She was representing Venus coming out from the water. In Sparta, girls danced entirely nude before great crowds of men and women; and among

the early Christians it was the custom for both sexes to be immersed in public entirely destitute of clothing of any kind. This is merely an evidence of the difference in the feelings and fancies of different people under different circumstances.

Whatever is according to law is right and moral always—whether it be society law, moral law, statute law, canon law, or common law, that happens to be quoted as authority. There is nothing right, and nothing wrong, in or of itself. There must always be some standard of comparison.

Why should we condemn a man for his morality, or the want of it? It is only an opinion, and people have different morals solely because, having grown up under different influences, they have finally come to accept certain opinions as their rule of life. We should always consider the age in which people live and the temptations and influences to which they are known to be subjected. The English have one rule of right, the French another, the Germans another, and the Japanese something quite different from any of these peoples.

Is it not strange that in this, as in other countries, we consider murder as the wickedest of all crimes, and yet the state coolly and cruelly kills its citizens, in its wars and executions, as if it were doing something decidedly meritorious! It kills its thousands and tens of thousands. Indeed, at times it makes a steady business of man-killing in some way. It claims to have a warrant for doing

such work. Then there is incest. There is quite a difference of opinion on that subject. Many peoples abhor it, but among others, quite enlightened, it is regarded as no great matter. Our Bible gives us information on that subject.

PART III

SPECIAL TOPICS

TO SEE, TO THINK, TO KNOW

In forming our ideas of what seeing is supposed to be, and what thinking and knowing is, we are assisted very much by considering how frequently these terms are used in place of each other and noticing how closely the thought in one case is allied with the thought in another case. Thus, we say we see, when we mean we perceive, we understand. Seeing is really a mental or intellectual operation. We do not see with our eyes, but through our eyes, as we see through a glass. We see with our mind, our intellect; so we do not perceive things when we simply open our eyes. The mind, the soul, the intellect, must first become aroused, and it must be put in working order before we can see in the proper sense of the word. Merely opening the eyes, even when there is an object before them, will not suffice.

When we are thinking, we are really feeling; and so when we see, we are also feeling. Our eyes are impressed with what we see precisely as our tongue is affected by what we taste, or as the inte-

rior of the nose is affected by an odor. So, what we know is merely what we see and feel, or it indicates how we see and how we feel. We are no more certain about what we know than we are about what we feel or believe. What we know at last, in all cases, is merely what we think and what we have come to believe. What we believe and think and know are all *one and the same thing*. In Latin, *videre* means to see, but it also means to perceive and to know. It is the same word precisely as the Ang-Saxon *witan*, our *weet*, which means to know. The same word exists in English to-day, but it is almost obsolete; it is seldom used and is quite limited in its application. We have *to wit*, chiefly in legal documents, and *wot* is occasionally found in poetry. But we have in common use *wit*, *wise* and *witness*, which are really the same words as Lat. *videre* and Ang-Sax. *witan*. The Germans have this *witan*, slightly varied, as *wissen* and *gewiss*, in very common use, the meaning being to know and to be sure. The Greek know is *gno*, with very little variation from our word. There is also the Greek *oida*, to know, same as Lat. *video*, to see. The Latins have *sentire*, to feel, our word *sense*, *sentiment* and *sensible*; but the Latin word means also to perceive or see.

We can form some idea of what thinking is, and what forms the word may assume, by noticing how many different words mean to *think*, in Latin. Thus, *cogitare*, to think, study; *intelligere*, to know, to see, to think; *meditare*, to think, *meditate*; *recordari*, to think, remember; *putare*, to suppose, believe; *arbitrari*, to judge, to think; *opinari*, to have

an opinion; *judicare*, to think, judge, *credere* to think, believe.

We should never lose sight of this one leading thought, that all thinking is feeling, and all seeing or perceiving is also pure feeling. When we state what we think, what we see, it is merely stating what and how we feel. We never get beyond our opinions, and these are uniformly matters of pure feeling, and nothing beyond that. Even what we know is merely what seems to us and what indicates how we feel.

Our pains and sorrows, as well as our pleasures and enjoyments, are wholly matters of thought and opinion. If we think we are happy, we certainly are happy; and if it should happen that we were in a state where there is no thought, no feeling, as when certain kinds of gas or vapor are inhaled, we should neither be happy nor otherwise. If we could in some way forget or overlook ourselves, for a time, we should have no sufferings—and likewise, during the interval, no enjoyments. Anaesthetics make us forget ourselves and certain medicines, and certain foods and drinks, have the effect, to a greater or less extent, of changing a person's whole nature for a certain time. A wide field is open here for experiment and exploration. We only suffer when we come to think of ourselves, and we ourselves are wholly responsible for what we are and how we feel. Our sorrows are wholly our own; they never make other people sorrowful, certainly not to any great extent. What we lose is nobody's loss but our own. Why should the loss trouble others? It

is only what they lose—or what they think they lose—that gives them pain. It often happens that what gives us sorrow causes happiness to others. There is a total want of harmony between any one man or woman and the rest of mankind. Is it not a well known fact that we have a secret feeling of satisfaction when we learn of the misfortune of even our friends—not because we delight to see them suffer, but to think how much more fortunate we are than they!

Why should we worry over the sorrows of other people? Our worrying will not be of any assistance to one who is suffering from the gout or the tooth-ache. Not in the slightest degree will our sympathies serve to alleviate the sufferings of our friends. On the contrary, our sympathy helps to nurse, and tends to magnify, the sorrows of others. The child begins to cry, after it has fallen, just as soon as we stop to condole with it over its misfortune. We should all take the world as we find it and meet death, disaster and distress without whimpering. These are all necessary evils and parts of the same play. If we consider beforehand where we are placed and remember the system that we are laboring under, we shall take the bitter with the sweet and never murmur. It is the bitter that gives sweetness its pleasant flavor. Sufferings do not worry savages as they do the civilized. What is a picture without shadows? It is merely a blank leaf. There are no pictures—no true pictures—that have no shadows; and there are none where the page is entirely covered with shadows. The mo-

notony of perpetual sunshine would be intolerable. *It is contrast that brings out color.* It is contrast and shading that develops melody in music. There is harmony in discord; or rather, harmony arises from discord. Without discord, without contrast, music itself would be impossible.

If I am correct in the position here taken, that our thoughts govern our whole course of life, and determine our every action, how important it is that we should uniformly have worthy thoughts, useful thoughts, correct thoughts! We are governed wholly by our ideas, beyond doubt, and an idea that is false has just as much influence upon our conduct and career as one that is well founded. Schopenhauer is right when he intimates that there are no harmless errors of belief. Errors of belief are our most dangerous possessions. They are not violent, like dynamite; they are more in the nature of an insidious disease, which consumes continually and finally destroys. Surely no intelligent man could for a moment doubt that errors of belief are for us serious mistakes in life, and no one is responsible for them but ourselves.

OUR DAILY WANTS

In this connection we will take up the subject of our wants. Our main source of trouble in this world lies in our wants, and if we had no wants, we should hardly have any troubles. Even our

riches are accumulated chiefly to supply our wants, but if we had no wants we should need no riches, for they could do us no good. And it should be observed that the lessening of our wants is the same as adding to our wealth. If we had no wants, what good would riches do? We could easily reduce the number of our wants, for on sober reflection we shall find that there are a great many things which we think we want but do not want at all. Most of our wants arise from the fact that others have the same wants and are able to supply them. But what natural or necessary connection is there between our wants and what other people want? As a matter of fact, we want things not for what they are but for what we are, and for what we imagine they are. It all depends upon how we think and how we feel. Some men, being misers, love gold; others more ambitious love fame, and really believe they could not dispense with it. For others an auto is the height of their ambition, while others again crave for nothing so much as cigarettes or whiskey. Force of habit and association has very much to do with our wants and desires.

All that civilization has done for the world thus far is to multiply its wants. If we had no civilization, we should have no wealth, and without wealth, most of our wants would speedily disappear. If we consider the necessities of our case, we shall find that our real wants are naturally few. A very little will suffice for a sensible, self-restraining man. If we take time to consider, we shall soon notice that most of our labor is expend-

ed in meeting wants that are purely imaginary and are to be found only in the minds of men. This is all a waste of exertion, a sacrifice on our part that is quite unnecessary. Men imagine that they want society, want cards, want praise, want honor, want riches, and hundreds of other things which they will find that they do not want, when they come to view things in a fair and sensible light.

A man is poor who has many wants that cannot be supplied; and his having money or land, or wealth in any form, which he is not able to make use of, does not help his case in the least. Wealth that cannot be used in meeting wants cannot properly be called wealth in any sense. What cannot be put to some use, is always worthless.

Like everything else, wants are good things as well as bad things—good in one case and bad in another. If we had no wants, we should have no pleasures, for pleasures come from satisfying wants. But the weakness of human nature is such that the satisfying of one want leads immediately to the birth of a new want, or possibly to two new wants. Contentment never seems to have been intended for the human family. Resistance is not pleasant, but it develops strength. In all countries where nature does most for man, it will be found that he does least for himself.

ILLUSIONS AND DELUSIONS

Illusions have been referred to incidentally, on former pages, but the subject is one of sufficient importance to justify further consideration. If, in continuing this subject, some things are repeated that have already been stated, they will certainly not be without some service. The subject that we have in hand in this work is one that, for the uninitiated, is burdened with many difficulties, and hence arises the propriety, if not the necessity, of presenting the same statements at different times and under different aspects, so that those who wish to learn may become familiar with ideas that at first appear strange, and that finally they may be inclined to accept as true what formerly they deemed preposterous.

Why should men have so much confidence in their own impressions and belief, when their whole experience in life warns them to proceed cautiously in their progress, as men uniformly do in a state of nature? Is it not a fact that we are being constantly deceived in what we see and hear? Does not our whole experience lead us to distrust ourself and to question our thoughts, our impressions, and especially the evidence of our senses, in all the observations that we have occasion to make? The business of nature, it would seem, is not to reveal the truth but to conceal it. Phenomena mislead us quite generally, in some,

if not in many, particulars. It often happens that we cannot distinguish water from sky, or clouds from mountains, when seen in the distance. We have nothing but impressions in regard to the character and make-up of even our most intimate acquaintances, and every day develops some new feature that we had not suspected before. What is there in all our experience, from childhood up, that would serve to give us confidence in our convictions, our opinions, our conclusions?

We are too much inclined to forgetfulness and inattention, when it comes to certain facts that we really ought to remember. For instance, we are constantly imagining that things have an expression or character of their own, when it is well known that nothing, no object, no creature, has a character or expression that can be called its own with any sort of propriety. Creatures and objects are what they are because of their surroundings and because of the influences to which they have been subjected from the beginning of their existence down to the present moment. But for men this is only part of the story. For men objects are simply what they think they are. If things around us, or those with which we come in daily contact, have certain qualities or characteristics, it is just such qualities or attributes as we ourselves have assigned to them. If things are ugly, it is only because we believe or consider them ugly; and things are considered handsome or agreeable for a similar reason. Savages regard certain developments of the person as features of beauty, while we would look upon

them as a gross deformity. Everything depends upon our thoughts. If a man have a carbuncle, or a dozen of them, and we do not happen to know it or notice it, he might as well have something else, or nothing at all, so far as we are concerned.

We are continually making categories and putting things in classes. We say this is a white man, and we put him in that class, though in reality he may be as black as a negro. The category or class that a man finds himself in settles the whole business; and as already intimated, this rank or classification is wholly and unquestionably the work of men. It is not God's work; ten thousand things that are credited or debited to this Being belong really in man's account. It is well understood by intelligent men generally that we not only give to God his character, but we actually make Him as we want Him. But if it is true that we make our own gods and devils and demons to suit our fancy, why is it not equally true that we make all the beings whose images are formed in our minds?

It should be constantly kept in remembrance that what we have in our mind is merely our view of things, while others have their views also. These different views of things never do and never can agree, and it is foolish ever to undertake to make them agree. Every nation has its own view of science, and the view of one nation is never like the view of another nation. The difference is always a question of more or less. In no country does a teacher, or a doctor, or a philosopher, hold the same rank or have the same office to perform

as he does in other countries. So words in any country have a different meaning in the towns from what they have in the cities, and in the courts from what they have among the common people. As already stated in another place, words have no other meaning than that which is assigned to them, and the same is true of attributes and qualities. Our whole concern about things is what we think they are, and what we should think they are. What other people think they are, is a matter that does not for one moment concern us.

It should be constantly borne in mind, that everything that is done by men or things, as well as their whole character, has to be interpreted, assimilated, adapted to our mind *and translated into our dialect*, before it can have, for us, any real place, force or value. For ourselves—and that means the whole thinking, sentient world—the question is not *what things are*, but *what we think they are*. Thus far, mankind have not been able to proceed a step farther than they are carried by their own thoughts. Truth has no value, in fact it is not living truth for us, until we accept it and give it a place in our curriculum. Even gold undiscovered and unappropriated is as good as no gold at all, but not any better.

It is all in the way we view things—rather than in what they are. It is the appearance of things, and not the reality, that impresses us. We call this thing good and that thing bad—but that signifies nothing, except that so we happen to feel. If an animal looks like an elephant, it might as well be an elephant, so far as the obser-

ver is concerned. If a man is considered a villain, there is no help for him. He might just as well be a villain. Where is the difference, in practice? Whether a man is or is not a villain, is a matter wholly *for men to decide*. God is not even appealed to. In practice, honesty is a mere matter of reputation. To be reputed honest, answers every purpose. That is what everybody finds. A villain in the eyes of some men is a hero in the eyes of others, and those who are inclined to reject this proposition are clearly laboring under a delusion. They do not understand the facts of the case.

It is a delusion to imagine that anything is lasting. All things are for this moment alone. How can we with any feelings of assurance predicate anything of any object? Everything constantly changes. It is here to-day and is gone to-morrow. Whatever it may have been in the past, it is something else at present. A thing must be fixed, and remain fixed and unchangeable to have any character. We cannot really see things when they are in motion. A bullet flies directly before our eyes, and yet we fail to perceive it. A picture of things is only for a day, a moment; it is always simply a snap-shot. What can a picture show, any picture, the best in the world, of the character and history of things? Not only things but our opinions of things, are for the *present moment only*. The picture of a battlefield is for one small section, and for one moment of time. The whole is presented as if struck with sudden petrification.

And what is an illusion? Merely a mistake in impression, in conviction, in feeling, in informa-

tion perhaps. There is nothing strange or unnatural about an illusion. It proves nothing. A man is not mad or insane because he suffers from an illusion; or if he is so, all men are mad or insane, for certainly all men have illusions, and they have them at all times in some form. All our impressions and convictions may be denominated illusions. Our ideas of value are all illusions; things, it is well known, are worth more or less merely according as we happen to think. It is a deception for us to imagine that some men are better or worse than others. Our ideas of crime and our belief in the necessity or propriety of punishments are unquestionably deceptions of a serious character. It is a hallucination to believe that God made this world, or even that such a being as God exists in the first place. It is man, in practice, who made the world, or who at least pictures it as we find it. It is men who make God, or who picture him as we find him commonly represented. Everything with which we have anything to do in this world is clearly the work of men. It is a delusion to believe, as many men do, that when the sun shines for them it shines for all the world beside; and that as they see things, so these must appear to people in distant lands. It is a delusion to believe that when we are ill everybody else is ill, and that as we feel, so other people must feel, of every age and every condition in life.

We are subject to illusions constantly, and they come upon us at all times and from every direction. Things, especially at a distance, always

appear larger or smaller than they are. At best we have nothing to guide us but estimates of our own, in all matters of size, distance, form, color, substance, quantity, quality, velocity, number, and indeed in practically all cases. It is hard ascertaining the real truth in any instance. We cannot rely with safety upon our own senses, and when we rely upon the senses of other people, the case is found to be still more doubtful. We are, as the Bible says, nothing but a worm, and we do nothing but crawl most of the time.

Men are building cob-houses as a regular business, and it is cob-houses that they are taking down. Speaking properly, we are busy with phantoms all the day long. Phantoms afford us our daily amusement. It is phantoms exclusively while we sleep, and it is phantoms likewise when we are awake. Our whole life may be called an illusion. We never see things; we see only the pictures of things, and these are always fanciful sketches colored more or less highly. Even a landscape is a picture that is constantly varying, and it never appears twice alike at different hours of the day. It has, as artists know, a morning view, a view at midday and a view in the evening—and these are all very much unlike. To the eyes of the old Greeks and Egyptians, the landscape appeared very differently from what it does to our eyes; and so it appears very differently in the pictures which they left to posterity. The landscape pictures of the ancients are entirely different productions from ours of the present day. In fact,

the ancients knew nothing of perspective, and they had no such conception of the landscape as we have.

MISTAKES OF THE WISE

How can we understand things, or how can we represent them, when they have no independence of their own? They are really found only in the conceptions of men; they have no limits or location, no form, no activity, no power, no character of their own, and they are never found twice alike at any two places or at any two points of time. These conditions apply to space and to time, and indeed to all things, which are at last only conceptions or developments of the brain of man. Especially do they apply to time. When it is 9 o'clock at any one place, it is not 9 o'clock at any other point on the globe either east or west; and when it is the summer season in one place, it is not necessarily the summer time at any other place. Seasons and temperature depend not alone upon latitude but upon the altitude of places. Temperature also depends upon the contiguity of large bodies of water, as well as upon other influences that need not be mentioned here.

What fair conception can man have of any existence that has no limits, no beginning and no end? This is true of time and space, and of things that exist only in our thoughts and reflections. The seasons have no fixed or determinate

point of beginning. In America spring begins with March, in England it begins in February. At what hour does our day begin? When or where does the earth start on its daily revolution? Nobody knows, and so we are left to suit ourselves on that matter, and thus it is with all questions of the kind. There is nothing fixed or constant about a day or about any other period of time. It is merely a matter of choice and opinion in all cases, and as everybody knows, opinions are remarkably variable.

It is well known that a person traveling east constantly gains time, as people express it, and traveling west a person constantly loses time. His watch will be 4 minutes slow or fast for every degree, or 70 miles, traveled either way. Suppose two men start from the same point to go round the world, one going east and the other west, each keeping his own record of time, day by day. The one going east will find when he returns that he has gained a day. For the people who remained in the place, we will say, it is Tuesday. For the one returning from the east it would be Wednesday, while for the one returning from the west, it would be Monday, he having lost one day. Here is a difference of two whole days, and we are reminded of the variableness and uncertainty of time. Time is, like religion and many other things, a mere development of man's brain. It would seem that our wise men ought to rectify their notions on this subject.

In astronomy, as in science generally, the custom is to start with an assumption and then to

search for evidence to justify the scientist in the position he has taken. And it must be observed that inquirers are very slow to confess their error when they find themselves mistaken in their theory, and they wander about aimlessly for a long time before they will take such a humiliating step as to confess their mistake. Unfortunately astronomers are usually in the wrong, not because they know so much less than other wise men, but because they are accustomed to venture into unusually deep water. It is found to be practically impossible to make any assertion in their department which on careful investigation is found to be strictly true. Astronomers are fond of laying down laws for nature, and then expecting nature to follow them. But as a rule it is found that nature has no laws, certainly none that it uniformly observes. It may proceed in a certain manner for a little distance, but it is liable to switch off in another direction, and do something entirely unexpected, at almost any moment. Nature is never uniform or regular in any of its operations. Every movement that it makes is independent of every other movement, and it never has any reference or relation to any predecessor.

It was for a long time assumed, and generally it is still asserted, that all the planets are globes, all their paths are circles, and their motions are uniform. But the fact is well known that none of the planets are properly spheres, none of their orbits are circles, or even ellipses, and in no case are their motions regular or uniform. It is also a fact that they never return to the point where they

started, and hence they never make complete revolutions. An approximation to the truth is never the truth itself; in fact an approximation is no truth at all. A revolution that is not complete is no revolution. A number that is less than twenty-five certainly is not, and never can be, twenty-five; and a body that lacks complete sphericity is not a globe in any sense. The only globes really are perfect globes, and it is folly to pretend otherwise for one moment. The only truth at all times is the exact truth; and it is a great misfortune that such a thing is *nowhere to be found*. Science will never progress very rapidly when the most important claims are founded on fallacies, even if the falsity is, as often happens, subsequently admitted.

Very many of the statements in astronomy are, like those found in metaphysics and mathematics, most recklessly and unaccountably made. We read in astronomical treatises of the planets carrying their moons with them in their travels around the sun; also of the earth, and other bodies, turning daily on its own axis, or around its axis. It is possible that the earth goes round the sun once a year, but can it have a daily motion besides? Can any body have two motions; can it travel in two directions, or make two revolutions, at the same time? Can an athlete turn a backward and a forward somersault all at once? It is evident enough that while the earth is turning round its axis, as supposed, it is not also turning around the sun. While a body is going in one direction, it cannot be going in some other direction

at the same time. In the case of the moon, it is conceded, even by astronomers, that while this body is pursuing its usual monthly course and simply advancing steadily, it is not also rotating about the earth. And what is conceded to be true of the moon must also be true in similar cases of other parts of the heavens. To go around a body implies that it must be stationary. The earth is not stationary, and so the moon cannot revolve around it. It simply does not. To go around implies a complete circle.

THE RELATIONS OF THINGS

In whatever direction we turn our attention, we are certain to find that it is impossible to connect events or trace their relation. Really, in the nature of things, there is no relation, outside of the minds of thinking men. All acts are independent of all other acts. Properly speaking, there is no such thing as object or motive for an action. It is possible that the Devil may have a motive, and probably statesmen, diplomatists, and politicians also have motives, but we think of few exceptions beyond these. Under the system of philosophy that prevails among reflecting men to-day, it is permissible to speak of the causes of action, but when motives are under consideration, we have in mind the movements of rational men. There is indeed little that is done by men on reflection, or

from what might be called a rational motive. As a matter of fact, men act from impulse or inducement, or perhaps from habit or fear—always from some influence that affects them or some incident that impels them at the time of the action. A man may have a motive, he may consider himself aggrieved or injured for months or years, and yet take no step to avenge himself or return the injury. So it is not the motive alone that impels a man to action at last. It is really something of recent date which incites to action, but which could not properly be called the motive in the case.

What we wish chiefly to impress upon the reader's mind is the undoubted truth that we cannot connect one act with another act, and in no sense could they be said to have any relation. Acts and movements always stand out free and independent of each other, as trees do, and as houses and individuals do generally. When we speak of one act being the motive or cause of another, we are talking about something that may be passing in our mind, but which does not exist in nature in any form. It will be remembered that motive never appears in a picture or painting, or in a piece of sculpture. Neither the chisel nor pencil will help us in presenting things that have no actual existence.

Every attempt to connect two separate events, or two actions, will be sure to result in failure. How shall we be able to say what an act means, or what the actor or operator had in view? Thus, we see a man hand over to another a sum of money. What name shall we give to the movement? It

may be a payment, it may be a gift, it may be merely throwing a sum of money away. The act in itself clearly has no meaning, no motive, though we may call it what we choose. Again, we see a man ride or walk by. How shall we know from his action alone what it means? It may be that the man is taking exercise, or he may be going for the doctor, or perhaps he is leaving the country. How shall we ever know the meaning of what we see, by mere perception, when really what we see has of itself no meaning? We see a house. What does that mean? It may be a home, a castle or a prison. How shall we determine which it is merely from what we see? In all such cases we properly do not see things. We merely see an object, a mass, a certain amount of material—nothing more. Its true character cannot be ascertained from perception alone. *Character* is something that can never be learned from *mere observation*. We might live with people a dozen years, or even a century, and still we should not know them as they are. People do not fully know themselves, and often they are not aware of their capabilities. How should others know them? Moreover, it should be borne in mind that character is *never a fixed quantity*. It varies from day to day and it is made as people go along. So a building that is a palace to-day may be a prison or a hotel to-morrow. It is not the material that gives objects their character. It depends more upon how they are used, or what for. It often happens that a man who is a private in the ranks at one time is the commander of an army later on. Seen

in the street without his uniform, how shall we decide in which capacity he appears? Clearly enough there are many points on which mere perception does not enlighten us. Indeed, the knowledge that we get from that source is at all times quite limited and uncertain.

We must repeat the old question, do we ever see things as they are? How could we, when nobody in the world pretends to know just how or what anything is? The very best that any man can do in such cases is to give his opinion. A picture is simply an opinion, a single view taken from a certain point at a certain time. A second picture taken by the same operator from the same standpoint would differ from the first, for we know that no two pictures are ever alike. Do pictures show things as they really are? To seem is everything; what things actually are, matters little. Plated ware serves as well as better goods, so long as its true character is not known.

In this connection I wish to present in a stronger light than before an idea that I have touched upon many times in the course of this work, and that is the matter of results and their causes. There are no real results and no real causes, though we are compelled to continue the use of such delusive terms by the present state of what goes by the name of science. Most assuredly one thing is never the *cause* or *result* of another thing, another factor. If we have results at all, they are in all cases the product of a great number of causes, all operating together at one and the same time. For instance, the reputation that a

man bears is determined as much by what his neighbors happen to hear or think of him as by what he himself actually performs. And so when we see an object presented in a certain form or color, the picture or impression that is formed in our mind is in no case a transcript or copy of the object itself. This picture or impression depends upon many things outside of the object in question—on the state of the atmosphere as a medium through which things are seen, upon the distance of the object, and upon the amount of light diffused at the time that the observation is taken. It will be found, moreover, that the picture will vary as the education, intelligence and ability of the observers vary. There is no proof or significance simply in a resemblance between things. Two trees resemble each other, but there is no connection or relation between them. A likeness has no connection with the object represented.

Again, causes could never be transformed into effects; things never mingle, never change, never really disappear. Causes always remain what they were. Thus, if we mix two colors, blue and yellow, we get green, but simply because green is, in this case at least, merely blue and yellow in combination. If we examine the mixture with a microscope, we shall find that we have merely what we had to begin with, blue and yellow. We cannot destroy identity by mixing. Mixture, as a process, is wholly imaginary, and so is the result produced. There is actually no change in the elements. So, how could we get anything new from *the combination?*

LIGHT AND COLOR

We will dwell briefly on the nature and effects of light and color. What we learn from that source will enable us to get a clearer insight into the nature of other objects that affect our senses. It will usually be found that the errors and delusions that we labor under in our conceptions of light and color are of the same character as the errors that mislead us in other sections of the external world.

It is a fact that is coming to be well understood that light and colors are not things standing out alone in space or floating in the air. They are merely things thought of or conceived, things impressed upon the brain of man, and without the help of some form of photography like this they would never be known to exist. Colors are merely developments of light, and they differ from each other only in the degree of illumination which they represent. Black represents darkness or no light; red has more light than black, yellow more still, and white has most of all. We may add that there is no doubt that no such thing exists as simple light or simple color; all color, like notes in music, is a compound arising from the co-existence or combination of other colors.

It is asserted by some writers that color lies wholly in the eye of the observer, but this is hardly a correct view of the case. We may have eyes and

yet perceive no color; to get the sensation of color, we must have not only the eye and light, but also the object in which the color is exhibited. However, it is quite true that color is not a possession that belongs to objects as individuals. It is for all practical purposes borrowed livery, since color comes chiefly, if not wholly, from the reflection of surrounding objects.

The surface of a lake on a summer day has no permanent or characteristic color of its own. It changes constantly as the light of the sun becomes brighter or more dimmed; and also as the clouds move and the winds change their direction. Every object that stands in the field of light is constantly casting shadows, and thus it exerts a permanent influence upon the colors of all objects in its vicinity. In a certain sense, all color is a result of surrounding influence, and this color changes at all times as the influence varies. The red paper on the walls of an apartment throws a red reflection upon every object in the room. A cloud may change its hues and shades in a few moments, as a result of shifting shadows or some new reflection. A cloud is at the same time a reflector and an opaque body that casts a shadow whenever it enters the sun's light. The color of all objects that are exposed to sunlight is very materially affected by the shadows that fall upon them.

So far from color being a permanent feature of objects, they are constantly changing their hues without any perceptible change of character. Flowers change their tints from day to day; water in a cup is white, while in the river or lake it ap-

pears blue or green. Iron when cold is dark and lusterless; when melted, it varies in color from deep red to glowing whiteness. The variableness of color, arising from the affect of external influences or conditions, affords a striking illustration of the variableness that we notice in the character and appearance of all things.

That the color of objects as seen by an observer depends more upon the structure of the eye than is commonly supposed, will be found evident enough by all who give the matter serious attention. To those who are blind, of course no color at all appears. Besides, many people are color-blind. They cannot distinguish green or black from blue. To their eyes, these colors appear quite alike. Some people have so little appreciation of color that they cannot name what they see, as others again cannot distinguish one tune from another or give it a name. They can tell what is white and what is black, and but little beyond that. It is a curious fact only lately noticed that the ancients were indifferent at least to some colors. Green, it is said, is not mentioned in the early writings of the Hindoos. Only a portion of the primary colors are mentioned in Homer. It is evident enough that objects do not appear red or green, or any other color, really because they are such, but because of the condition of the eyes of the observer himself. To different people things appear different because their eyes are different. It is so with taste and other senses.

What is particularly noticeable is the effect which one color has upon another color when two

of them are presented to the eye at the same moment. It sometimes intensifies the other color, and sometimes it gives it a different hue entirely. This is the effect of contrast or comparison and accords with a law we see exemplified in all the realms of nature. It is the same result as we obtain when we combine two powders of different hues and get a new color. In music this phenomenon is much in evidence. The sound of one string in connection with that of another string gives us an effect that is at the same time new and striking. Again, the sound of a violin with a strong tone has a great effect upon a soft-toned instrument played at the same time. It often changes, for the time being, the character of the milder instrument completely, and what is noticeable is that this effect upon the ear of the player is one that lasts for quite an appreciable time. We have the same experience in tasting liquors, or dishes at the table, either one after the other or taken in connection. Indeed, the ear is never free from a variety of sounds, or the tongue from a variety of tastes. It is impossible in this world to get any impression that is independent of all extraneous influences.

It is demonstrated clearly enough every day that things have no character of their own, or they have none that cannot be negatived or modified by the influence of things with which they are associated. Thus, water, the same water, is found to be either hot or cold when tested with other water. If we put our hand into a dish of water, the latter will be pronounced either hot or cold according to

the temperature of water into which we may have plunged our hand a moment before. All that any one means by saying water is cold is that it is not so warm or so hot as some other water with which he happened to make his comparison. This is by no means an exceptional experience. It is in harmony with a law that is known to be universal. Can we say that things are what they seem? So far as the comparison goes, they certainly are. But it must not be forgotten that in every case the truth arises solely from the comparison of one thing with another. Things may be relatively so and positively not so. To a person having a fever, the temperature of a room seems high; while another, with a different condition of body, experiences a sensation of coldness.

Few people realize how very much of all that mankind think and believe and know is the result of teaching in some form. All of our conceptions and thoughts are largely the result of instruction, and usually our methods of doing things can be traced to the same influence. A few ideas may be inherited, but the number is extremely limited. The infant has to be taught to see and hear properly, as it has to be taught to walk and to speak correctly. In its earliest stages it does not see objects at all, and it is a long time after birth before the child sees the world as it is seen by adults. Colors are not appreciated till many months have elapsed. People who have been blind during the early portion of their life, but who finally have been blessed with sight, have an interesting experience. They have no idea of the distances of

objects, nor do they see raised forms. To them everything appears flat and monotonous. In fact, in looking out of a window, they see nothing but a picture. So it is in all art; people have to *learn before they know*. The crude work and childish forms presented by art in its earliest stages remind us of a people slowly emerging from blindness and ignorance.

It must not be forgotten that most of the errors in seeing arise from mistakes of judgment, or mistakes made in conclusions drawn. Thus we are too apt to judge of a town by the railroad station and its surroundings, though it may be, and often is, the backyard and the poorest part of the place. So we are apt to jump at conclusions in regard to the wealth or progress of a state from the section that we happen to see when we are riding along on the cars; and yet we know that this is no evidence at all as to the real facts in the case. It is never fair, it is never excusable, to judge of what we have not seen by what we have seen—though people are constantly making that absurd mistake.

It may not be amiss to remind the reader again that to see things, they must be in a state of rest, for a moment at least. A streak of lightning is an illusion; it is merely a fiery ball moving so rapidly as to give the appearance of a continuous line. A fire brand whirled rapidly around gives the impression of a fiery circle. All these facts show clearly that we do not see things as they are. We merely get impressions, which are sometimes correct and sometimes not. Circumstances

may change any impression, as it may alter any picture. The proposition seems so plain that it is a waste of time to discuss the question—and yet the great mass of men, even the most intelligent, really think there can be no doubt about what they perceive. They believe in the truth of what they see, when they have no means of knowing what the truth is. Force of habit, with education and association, has much to do with the conclusions that are formed by men.

ERRORS IN ESTIMATES

It is time that people should revise their estimates of truth; it evidently is not what they have all along assumed it to be. Why should we expect to find truth in history, or truth in the ordinary transactions of business men, when it is well known that lies are in good demand and they usually stand at a premium. It should be remembered that only a comparatively few people have a personal interest in telling the truth or in hearing it told. One man says one thing and another says something quite different. Which one shall we believe? Usually the story of one is as credible as the story of another. When we come to examine the matter carefully and considerately, we shall find that *lies are the chief stock in trade*, so far as concerns the general business of life. Nobody wants to be rated at what he is actually

worth. Everybody wants to be rated at rather more than he is worth—except when it comes to a question of taxes. So far from people wanting the truth told, it is uniformly the truth that, up to the last moment, they persistently endeavor to conceal. A great many people—and very good people, too—do not want even their ages known. They do not know what might happen in the family, and so they feel that it would be just as well if their neighbors did not happen to know every little point in their family history. When it comes to the matter of dress, every man and woman appears in disguise. Dress makes of the wearer a new creature. Very few people appear to advantage in undress. Besides, their nearest neighbors would hardly recognize them, if they appeared wholly without apparel.

Everywhere, it will be observed, men are given credit which they do not deserve. Instead of being commended or rewarded for what they have done, they are often rewarded for something that some one else has done. People love to talk about justice and fairness, and roll the words in their mouth like sugar candy, but usually it is very little concern that they have as to how far justice and fairness prevails among their fellow men. Their interests, their appetites and their feelings will ordinarily be found to be in some other direction. How others fare is a question that troubles very few people. The question that does concern them is rather how they themselves shall fare. If everything goes well with them and they are accumulating money or bonds, why

should they worry over the injustice which happens to fall to the lot of others? People do not stop to inquire if it is the right man that is punished, or the right man that is buried. They seem to be satisfied, if they are assured finally that somebody has been punished or somebody buried. People are generally possessed of the absurd conviction that the affairs of the world run smoother, for a time at least, after somebody, possibly some innocent person, has been punished. And as to burying other folks, the more of these that are put under the ground, the more room and the greater are the opportunities, it would seem, for those who survive. However, in connection with the matter of punishments, a slow but steady change and improvement may be noticed in the sentiments of the American people. It will be remembered that the author of this work has condemned our criminal laws and criminal punishments for many long years, and *he condemns them still*. These punishments are cruel, senseless, barbarous, unjust and entirely unnecessary. Besides, they are outrageously expensive.

And finally, how silly it is to go on boasting of what we have done and are doing, and talking volubly about the reliableness of history? How do we know, how shall we ever know, with all the loud acclaim, who are our truly great men? How shall we ascertain at last how much of all that is passed to the great man's credit really belongs in some other man's account? It should not be forgotten that what any one man can achieve alone in an ordinary life time, no matter how able or how

active he may be, is a *very insignificant factor at most*. And it must be remembered that great men never lead the people. They merely float in at high tide and find a landing place somewhere, just as opportunity offers. They are great only so far as they represent the people and do the people's bidding. They belong to a certain era and they would not be recognized as great men in some other era. If there is anywhere any natural production of earth, it is the great man. He produces nothing himself; he simply is produced. He is merely the instrument or medium of other men. No man can by any possibility make himself great; he is only great so far as people call him so, and merely because they call him so. The people put him up, and the people can take him down again. Often a day or a night suffices for such a simple operation as this. As an element in government the common people are quite as indispensable as the king himself. Neither could exist for a moment without the other.

Napoleon was a great man, if there ever was one, and where did he land finally? He struck a rock at last in the southern Atlantic and quickly went down. He was not the only great man that suffered shipwreck. Greatness never helps a man when he needs help most. Napoleon was as great at Leipsic and Waterloo as he was at Austerlitz and Jena. Success is no evidence of greatness, neither does defeat prove any lack of merit. The greatest of men have failed in their undertakings, and the smallest of men are often successful. Is a man weak because he cannot lift a ton? Even

God is not great enough to do things that are impossible. Is a man a failure because the fates happen to be against him? We credit the great man with too much, and then we make it even at last by debiting him too much. Hyperbole is altogether too common in both history and biography.

Do we wonder why the reputations of great men are so ephemeral, so uncertain? It is because of the flimsiness of their pretensions. The world of to-day hardly knows what a great man is, and much less does it know who should be called great. He is usually considered to be an extraordinary personage, but really no such people exist. At best every man when he comes to the final test, is found to be *merely ordinary*. Of course some men know more than others, but that is all. It often happens that great men are admired most where they are known least. In this business, as it is with lovers, fancy and imagination play a leading part. Plenty of people may be heard to cheer vociferously the names of Descartes and Kant who never read an original line of these great writers. All that the public knows of these men is what they have read casually in the works of other authors. Such is greatness—it lies wholly in what people say.

We never know anything of the real private life of great men. That is a chapter that is never found in history. The little deeds are never noticed—the petty, trivial, and even contemptible things! And how many of this class of men are sane, and how many are not? The world will never know. Too many of them, we know, are

simply spoiled children. They never quite find their level. A few of them may be better than other men, but we are never able to ascertain just who they are to whom this remark may justly apply.

To continue our inquiry into the merits and claims of the great men, we will take the violin as an illustration: A man has a good violin, which he plays uncommonly well. To which shall we assign the chief merit, the instrument or the player? Really, to neither. The violin does its work, and does it well; the artist does his work, and does it well. As between the two, how can there be any superior claims under the head of excellence?

Again, take the violin as an instrument with which to give proper expression to certain pieces of music. It is made of many parts, and they are all indispensable. If any one is absent, or weak in execution, the violin cannot give its best effects. There are the strings, four of them, and they must be properly attuned. Then there is the bow, having two principal parts, the hair and the wood or stick, which must be of good material and properly adjusted. There is also the bridge, small, but very important. And finally the sounding post, quite insignificant in appearance. Yet without this piece, properly placed, no violin is able to do its work satisfactorily.

Which of these several parts of the violin has the highest claims for work well performed? Of course it is absurd to speak of merit or claims in any such connection. And just so it is with the claims of the great man. He is only part of the

show at best; he is one of the performers, even though he be known as the "star." The show could not dispense with him, and he could not dispense with the show, at least not unless he left the business.

PRAISE AND FAME

Why should men want, why should anybody want, either praise or fame? They cannot be of any interest or concern to sensible men; they can afford them no actual attraction. They are mere baubles, and they should be so rated. They are not rewards for work well done, nor for achievements honestly performed. People are praised not for their virtue or goodness, but because they happen to strike somebody's fancy, or some one imagines it is his interest to praise them. Praise proves nothing; curses prove nothing. Men, the best of men, are lauded to-day and condemned to-morrow, or at least discarded or neglected to-morrow. Oscar Wilde is an example. He was persecuted, condemned, and finally imprisoned by his own people. As a matter of fact he died from injuries received at the hands of his countrymen. His name for a time was rarely mentioned without producing a loathsome feeling, and at last he was practically forgotten. But lo! not so very long after his death, there was a remarkable change of feeling—in Germany, in France, and even in England and America—and Oscar Wilde, transfigured

as he was, appeared to the world again, this time as a genius of the highest type, and a great man! Whether he was, or is, really a good man, is not yet determined; but if a man happens to be a genius, his morality, or the want of it, becomes a trifling matter.

The case of Nietzsche is also worthy of notice. Very few people know anything about him, and it is for that reason that he is generally believed to be a genius. In his case, as in the case of our God, if we knew more about him, we doubtless would not have so high an opinion of his merits. But it is not to be denied that Nietzsche said some remarkable things—as people often do when their mind is out of order—and therefore people are confident he must have been a remarkable man. It is a very difficult thing to form a correct estimate of the value of public opinion, especially when it comes to a question of the popularity of individuals. The public changes its opinion so readily and so frequently, that we do not get the time to take the measurement properly. Besides, when there are so many small men that achieve greatness, what chance is left for men of larger caliber?

Fame, even under the most favorable conditions, is a most uncertain possession. Fame is like the mercury in a thermometer—down in the morning and up at noon. The mercury does not rise because it is hot, but because the sun or the atmosphere is hot. The mercury is only an indicator. And so it is with fame. It does not prove either the worth or the greatness of the one who becomes famous. It does indicate the fickleness

and oftentimes the ignorance of the masses. It also indicates at times the skill, and at times the assiduity, of those who have the making of reputations, and who perhaps follow it as a business.

Why should men expect or ask for fame? What have they done, what can they do, that entitles them to credit or compensation? No man accomplishes anything alone, and so what is it that he can claim to have achieved? Whence arises the justice of the claim of any man above other men to a reward for any sensible, worthy or humane act that he may have performed? He has done his duty, perhaps, as any man should, and yet he deserves not even so much as thanks. He does not deserve even honorable mention. Fame, honor and rewards are not things that belong justly to any man either living or dead. That is my doctrine, and it long has been my doctrine, on this subject. Honors never elevate or improve any one, and a sensible man never desires them. It is better to be without them.

Fame, as intimated before, does not last—nothing lasts. The rocks do not last; countries perish, or their boundaries disappear; heroes perish, cities perish. Where is Persopolis, where is Babylon, where is Thebes, where is Sparta; where is Paul, where is Caesar, where are the Pharaohs? What is there in all that the world has to offer that would justify a sensible, thoughtful man in taking a life-time to acquire? We call a man great, but does that make him great, or prove for a moment that he is great, or that he deserves to be called so? There is absolutely no

evidence in a reputation. So much is beyond all question. One great act does not make a man great, any more than one good act makes a man good. In fact what a man does in this case and that case is no proof that determines his real character. Character is something that it takes a lifetime to develop. A great man is one who is great every day in the week, but of such, there are none to be found.

What is there to inspire us with feelings of emulation? Why should we be interested in the acquirements or accomplishments of other people? And what are great feats? Merely what certain individuals find it easy to perform. Some men can turn a double-somersault, and some could not. That is all there is of the matter.

Some like to be above other people. But what satisfaction can there be in being located at some great elevation? The higher up a man is, the more he is exposed. It is not pleasant at all to be at the top of Notre Dame, in Paris, or St. Peter's, in Rome. It is much safer lower down. What is true of elevations if this character is true of elevations in society. To be a king, is to be well up in the world, but then consider the risks that he runs and the disadvantages that he labors under! And yet there are people who really like to be on some elevated spot where everybody can gaze at them! They covet exposure, even if they lose their lives by the venture.

WHAT IS ART?

Everybody imagines that he has a clear idea of the character and purposes of art, but few indeed have anything but a very inaccurate conception of its true nature and power. Really, everything that is done or achieved by man belongs in the domain of art. All those who have the skill that enables them to accomplish what they undertake are true artists. A painter is an artist, because he expresses his ideas on canvas in such a manner as to leave a lasting impression on the minds of those who notice his productions. The poet is an artist for a similar reason, and so is the historian and the architect. Science is to know; but art is also to know. Knowledge comes before action in all cases. An actor is an artist, because he interprets, combines, contrasts and impresses. A musician, and especially a composer, is likewise an artist.

An artist is not, as many suppose, a copyist or an imitator. He is not even one whose business it is chiefly to adorn. He designs and creates, if he be a true artist, on his own account. Sometimes he decorates or adorns, but that is not his ordinary mission. Artists, above all other men, are interpreters of nature.

The world is full of artists. The Devil himself is an artist; the priest also is an artist, an expert performer in his own department. Nobody knows half so well how to make a desired impres-

sion upon man as the Devil and the priests. The politician does admirably in his way, too; and so does the lawyer. They are both artists. There is a great deal of policy in war, and where there is policy, a great deal of art is required to carry the policy into effect. Church performances are largely dramatic in character. They are supposed to be things done before the Lord, but they are usually things done before men, the design being to leave an impression upon the minds of those who are assembled. All parade, all pomp, all processions, are purely and exclusively dramatic.

There is art in all the affairs of common life. Art is often found in ordinary conversation, especially at social gatherings. Everywhere in this world, and particularly in civilized life, we find make-believe carried on systematically and persistently among men. In this practice, men are like children who, as we know, have an inordinate fondness, particularly in their sports, for making believe. They love to play parts, sometimes that of a bear, sometimes of an elephant, and sometimes a locomotive. It is all make believe, but carried on in dead earnest. Even the lower animals are artists who delight in similar sports. A young kitten will treat a paper ball precisely as it would a mouse that was trying to escape. Indeed, in our intercourse with men it is often difficult to decide just when they are in earnest and when they are only making believe. Things, and people especially, are not always what they seem; and to trust to appearances implicitly, sometimes proves disastrous. It cannot be borne in mind too well that,

as before observed, this world is *full of artists*. Even the executioner is an artist, is he not?

The best illustration as to how far we see things correctly, as well as how our ideas of nature develop with age and experience, may be found in the paintings and sketches of people in the early stages of civilization. If we examine the landscape and scenes as we find them in Egypt sculptured upon the walls of tombs, and in the ruins of temples and palaces, we shall be able to form a fair conception of how the people of that country looked upon their fields and gardens, and how they viewed the scenery about them. The old Egyptians painted and sketched what they saw very differently from ourselves, for the reason that they observed nature from a standpoint different from that to which we are accustomed. A rock or a river was not for them what it is for us; and a tree, to their minds, was an entirely different object from what appears to our vision and enters into our conception when we observe such an object. Is it anything strange that the sketches that the Egyptians made were quite unlike the paintings that we find hung upon the walls of our museums at the present day? The trees that were sketched by the artists of ancient Egypt appear as if they were seen from a distance. We find their outlines sharply defined, like a cone or a pyramid thrown against the sky, and we find but little else. The Egyptians had but an imperfect idea of the actual size, color, form, character or appearance of an object. They had a fair notion of the position of things in their relation to other

things; they could draw a sort of map or chart, and that was as far as they could go. To present objects as we do in our paintings and engravings was for them quite impossible; and so it is for all peoples in the early stages of their life history.

The ideas of the Egyptians on the character and appearance of objects were so different from ours that we are quite unable to interpret their sketches as we interpret the sketches of our own artists of the present time. They had little or no idea of perspective, and of shading they made little use. Hence it is no wonder that when, in their sketches, they came to locate the different objects of a landscape or garden, as we locate them in a picture or drawing, they were practically helpless. It is always impossible for a man to see what he does not or cannot see, or to feel that which he is not old enough or wise enough to appreciate. There is strength of mind, like strength of body, for every one, but it can never pass a certain measure. The Egyptians, like many other people, were simply in the childhood state.

We might note in this connection that the career of the old Greeks in the domain of art was very similar to that of the old Egyptians. They too saw the world as children see it, and as children they painted their forms and outlined their sketches. They presented their subjects in the crudest and simplest forms imaginable. They knew little of the value of shading, and of perspective absolutely nothing. In fact their work in this line was little better than symbols; they did not make likenesses, they merely presented forms

or strokes to remind the observer of certain objects, which, it might be added, was the original design of all sketching.

In the earliest ages of Greece, a god or a goddess was represented by a log or a block of stone. Placed upright it was a pillar, and the pillar finally developed into a statue. It is worthy of mention that the German *säule*, a pillar, is used to denote a statue, taking the usual form of *bild-säule*; and so the Greek *kion* is used both to denote a pillar and a monument or gravestone. A new departure in early art was noticed in the head and face hewn at the top of the stone, leaving the lower part of the block untouched. In Moslem countries to-day, a stone post serves very generally for a tombstone, and often a head or turban is hewn at the top of the stone to indicate the resting place of a boy or a man.

It is evident enough, in all cases of sculpture and painting, that the artist finally presents simply what he sees in his own mind, his conception. Savages and children present objects as if seen from a distance. They are simple outlines, because they notice little or nothing else. The features of the face are generally overlooked by all native artists. In all their efforts, there is evidence of a lack of appreciation of all proportion. Of course, size has properly nothing to do with any sketch or picture. A camel may appear on paper with the bigness, or littleness, of a gnat, and yet it would still represent a full-sized camel. But what is demanded in all cases is the proper proportion of parts, and here is where the failures

generally appear, even in the better classes of work. The head is too big or too little; or perhaps the ears, the hands, or the trunk is out of proportion. The proper size of any part is not given by the artist, because it is not known. It is not within the power of the eye to determine size in any case with accuracy. We can measure, of course, but that is a mechanical operation, and the result is merely a matter of inference or calculation, which is quite a different thing from perception through the senses. How much does measuring help to give us exact ideas of size, or distance, or quantity? How far is a mile, seventy rods, or five hundred rods? Who knows with any precision the height of one hundred feet, or even seventy feet? We are very much like savages, when it comes to a question of distance. It is either far or near with them, and that is about as close as they are able to define.

LANGUAGE AND PLAGIARISM

What is language? Everything around us, everything that comes into view is language, because everything that we encounter ordinarily has something to reveal to us. All art is language, and the better the expression of the idea, the better is the art. The landscape is language, in its way—so is the tree, the rock, the river, the flocks and the herds. In the words of the poet, there are

“books in the running brooks, and sermons in stones.” All things that come under our notice bring out thoughts that have been lying dormant within us; they simply give us ideas and induce us to think. That is all that a picture can do, all that language itself does, generally speaking. A cathedral is a picture, and so is a poem a picture, a presentation more or less elaborate of some life scene. Everything is a picture, if we are able to read and interpret it properly. We must know how to translate a language before we can understand and appreciate what is said. On that condition alone is any language intelligible, either to ourselves or to any one else.

The fountain of all thought, all knowledge, lies within ourself. Our success and progress in life depends not so much upon what or how things are, as upon what they say to us and how we understand them. The best of books are worthless to us, if we do not read them or do not understand them. Can we understand what we read, and have we an interest in the subject? *That is the whole question*, in such cases. Greek is Greek to everybody who does not understand the language, or at least does not have the key. The same is true of English or Hebrew. These tongues are intelligible to some and wholly foreign and untranslatable to others. So it is with a landscape, a mountain, or a mansion. All depends upon how things appear to us, and what we see in them. There is something of interest to be read and learned in everything in nature, provided we have learned our lesson properly in the first place. The

untutored Indian observes a score of things in his walk through the forest that the white man would never notice, or that he could not interpret if he should notice them.

We might add that every piece of art, a house, a painting, a figure, is a creation, a contrivance, a combination, entirely independent of all other things. All houses, it is true, resemble other houses, but they are never copies, no matter how much they resemble each other. There are no copies or imitations either in nature or in the works of man. A man who builds a house has gotten his ideas from what he has seen, and yet his work is in no sense a copy. All we do in this world, at best, is to get ideas and acquire knowledge. It is nonsense to talk of copying, of plagiarism. No such thing as a copy, properly so called, anywhere exists. Would we copy anything if it did not please us and if it were not in harmony with our nature? Nothing pleases us, nothing is acceptable, unless we have grown up to it and have learned to appreciate its truth and beauty. We are all plagiarists, or no plagiarists exist. In a certain sense all learning is plagiarism; we get all that we know, in some way, at the expense of other people. Or in other words, if it were not for other people, we should never learn anything. Our communion in life is wholly with man. It is contact, friction, effort, that makes us learn.

How should we go to work to steal a man's thoughts? Who is the man that has any thoughts that we could steal? We can only steal thoughts from a man on condition that he really has

thoughts that he himself owns to the exclusion of everybody else. What are the thoughts that any man really owns? We have never heard of any undisputed possession of that kind. If my neighbor happens to get a valuable thought a day or two earlier than myself, does that invest him with true ownership? Fortunately thought cannot be caged, as we do with beasts and birds, and it often happens that before a man gets ready to announce his discovery to the world, a dozen other men may have been favored with the same thought.

In fact, no man is indebted to others for what he knows. It is a delusion to imagine that we learn from other people—*we never do*. What I learn to-day is because of what I knew yesterday and because of the efforts I have put forth in order to learn. Suppose my neighbor or my teacher has the wisdom of Solomon, what good would that do me, if I did not know something to start with and was not anxious to learn? The clearness of one man's vision never helps the perception of another man. This book now before the reader is filled with wisdom, but will it necessarily and of itself make anybody wiser? I fear not. Books to be appreciated at their full value must be read and understood. Those that are merely placed upon library shelves do not count. Then, it must be remembered that many people cannot read, and others again, cannot understand; and therefore they do not always appreciate what is placed before them. What a broad gap there is between those who write books, and those who read them, or rather who do not read them! They

never quite understand each other. In fact, they do not seem to try. What wonder is it that they often sit and make faces at each other, like children? The writer is apt to think that the people are stupid or indifferent; and the people in return are confident that the writer does not know as much as he evidently imagines he does. Doubtless it always will be so.

OUR BUSINESS CODE

Where do we find our code of morals duly recorded to-day? It certainly is not in the Bible. That is a book seldom consulted at the present time, especially when we come to a question of what is right and what is wrong. Neither are we accustomed to consult our statute books when it comes to questions of this nature. Men latterly have but little fear of the law, and really no regard for it, except in the comparatively few cases where there is some danger of prosecution. The law never serves as a restraint upon the actions of men, except in those rare instances where there is some one who stands ready to see that it is enforced. Of course, we all know that as a matter of fact only a small proportion of laws are ever observed or put in force. As long as no one complains, everything is quiet and matters go on with gratifying smoothness, precisely as if no laws had ever been enacted.

But there is a new code of morality that is coming into vogue just now, a new rule of legitimacy, a new standard of propriety. It is well known that the statute law, as already intimated, serves as a rule for only a small portion of the daily conduct of man, while much the larger portion is governed by the common law of the people, which is so shaped and so modified from year to year as to keep in harmony with the times, and with the recognized interests of our active and progressive citizens. The law that controls the conduct of men just now is simply business law. This common law of the people, or public sentiment, decides what is right and what is wrong, or what is permissible and what is not, without any reference to laws passed by Congress or decrees issued by the president. Many things that are considered crimes, according to our statutes, subjecting the offender, as they do, to fine and imprisonment, are passed over as things eminently proper by those who have the making and the unmaking of our common law of custom.

According to statute law generally, it is a crime, punishable with imprisonment in a jail or in a penitentiary, to cheat or steal, or to rob one's neighbor, under any pretense whatever. But according to our business code of the present day, the case is different, and nothing is more proper, or at least more customary, than to cheat and rob one's neighbor, particularly if the job is done in a neat and workmanlike manner, according to the prevailing business methods of procedure. In business ordinarily, the only opportunity that a

man has to demonstrate his astuteness, and his superior sagacity, is when he can overreach or outdo his neighbor in some ordinary, or perhaps extraordinary, transaction. We all know that we are swindled and robbed every day by some one or more of those who are favored with our patronage. It is only a question of more or less—sometimes it is only a trifle, and sometimes the cheat amounts to quite an appreciable sum. Still, our patronage continues as usual.

We are swindled in all sorts of ways, and then there is such a multitude of middle-men who come forward and demand their share of the tribute, like so many Arabs of the desert! We get it daily in the form of extortionate profits charged by the dealer, to enable him to get rich in an incredibly short space of time. It often comes in the form of shoddy goods sold to us as first class articles; and very frequently we pay our tribute in a disguised form through the medium of short weights, or measures more or less curtailed.

We see and know, and even feel the wrong that we suffer, but we have become so accustomed to being defrauded in various ways, that we really wonder why men do not all cheat. As it is, we simply smile to notice how cleverly the trick is done. Pure sleight of hand! We adore smartness in this country, much more than they do in foreign lands. People can become accustomed to any sort of oppression, and finally they reach such a stage of insensibility, as to what they suffer, that black appears white to them and they actually come to

call it by that name. People get to be color-blind after a time—in business matters, as well as in other cases.

For centuries mankind have become so inured to slavery that it now appears to most of them to be quite the proper thing indeed—proper at least for the masters. “What could we do,” is their excuse always. They really could not imagine how they could possibly subsist without masters—good, kind masters, to provide for people, and protect them. We have *always* had masters! Yes, and we have had murderers from the days of Cain down. But does the example set by any one or a thousand men make a wrong right? No, *it never does*. A crime is a crime, and its color is always black, no matter how much you bleach it, or even whitewash it. We might, in closing this topic, speak of the frauds perpetrated in the name of religion, and for its benefit, but the story is too old, and the facts are too well known. We will pass on to a subject that is possessed of more interest.

PROTECTION AND ITS ABUSES

We have noticed, in our investigations thus far, that people often talk about things that they know little or nothing about. Moreover, their manifest ignorance does not seem to give them any concern. They not only do not know, and they know they do not know, and yet they are so

unconcerned! They do not care. This is especially true of the subject of Protection, a matter that people talk very much about and of which they know very little. They have come to imagine that it is something that is good for everybody. But that is an error, as usual. Protection is something that is good only for those who are protected, and the number of these is very small, compared with the multitude that is not protected. Moreover, protection is not always good even for the one protected.

It is assumed that the chief mission of government, or of the state, is the protection of its citizens. But what a serious misapprehension this is, and how far short it comes from being justified by the facts of the case! It is also assumed that one of the leading purposes that the state has in view, at all times and between all men, is to promote the cause of justice. But that is another delusion quite as serious as the one that we have just noticed. How could the state be just to all men? The fact is that it never even makes the attempt. It never really desires to be just, at least not at all times and to all men. What the state wants, and the only thing that it wants in this direction, is justice for its friends, its patrons, its clients, its supporters. What does it really care for those who do not happen to be classed among its friends? And for that matter, what does any one care for those who are not his friends, or for those who may not at some future time be both able and willing to render him some service? What everybody is looking for and constantly craving, in this

blessed country of ours, is favors, friendly interposition, and pecuniary assistance, whenever the opportunity occurs. That is what we are here for, and it is what our friends are here for. We are here to be helped, and they are here, supposed, to render assistance in time of need and in cases of emergency.

As a rule, everybody craves protection. We all realize our feebleness, our littleness and our utter insignificance; we are anxious, at the earliest opportunity, to ally ourselves with those who are both valiant and powerful, just as people did in feudal times. If people do not happen to have a castle themselves, they want to be on good terms with somebody that has one. We are all more or less inclined to a feeling of languor and effeminacy, and we are never so happy as when we are able to lean upon somebody for support. We all want to rest some day in Abraham's bosom. We want somebody to love us dearly—somebody to work for us, favor us, please us, bless us. We are occasionally ready to do something for others, but it is only occasionally, and when we do, we uniformly want our pay—ten, twenty, and possibly a hundredfold. Moreover, it is not the weak and helpless alone that desire help and that usually want favors and protection. The state itself wants constant attention, and it wants assistance regularly rendered. And what indeed would the Lord himself do, if there were no men and women to do him reverence and attend to the sacrifices and ceremonies? We pause for a reply.

But let us return to the topic with which we

began the article—state protection, or protection generally speaking. If it is the mission of the state to protect anybody, it is its duty to protect everybody. But that is practically impossible. If it protected everybody in general, it would clearly protect nobody in particular. In practice, it is well known that in every case where some one is protected, or favored in any way, hundreds, or perhaps thousands or tens of thousands, of others just as worthy are either neglected or seriously wronged in some way. But even this is not the whole story. It costs money to protect people in this or in any other country. But who pays the bill? The people, the masses, the consumers as we call them—they pay the bill. Protection, we repeat, is expensive, and those who are not protected are the ones who uniformly bear the burden.

Again we urge that the state cannot with any sort of justice or propriety select a few persons and favor them, to the exclusion of all others. It should protect all, if any, the bad as well as the good, the poor as well as the rich. But everybody knows that this is just the kind of protection that never prevails either in this or in any other country. The state helps its friends, as already intimated, and it fails to recognize others. The state, bear in mind, is intensely human. Of course the state may sometimes be inhuman, but it never is superhuman. It is one of the earth's natural productions, just like every other production. People who make the mistake of expecting to find something extremely noble or elevating in the state, quite forget its origin, its his-

tory and the very ordinary elements which enter into the compound. It is men that make the state and that run the state. Men are the state, sometimes with the help of women and sometimes perhaps with a little inspiration from Providence.

We have only to remark in conclusion that if there be any two things that the state should furnish at all times without money and without price, those two things are justice and protection. But as a matter of fact, in this country at least, they are actually the highest priced articles to be found in the market. They ought to be as free and as inexpensive as the air we breathe, but are they? If you want justice, you are compelled to go to law to secure it, and even then you often fail. What you are sure to get is a bill of costs to pay and much vexation. As to protection under the law, people should not use the word in that connection. There is no such thing in practice. Nothing really protects a man at all times and in all places, from disease, accident, injury or loss of property, but his own individual strength, together with his own wise precaution and general good sense.

The state affords practically no protection in this direction—nothing but a lawsuit, and that as everybody knows is not a pleasant thing to have in the family. However, a lawsuit is the only relief that the state has to offer. What its result shall be, nobody can prognosticate. Nothing is so uncertain as the verdict in a lawsuit. Law is much like war. There is very little in either that is fair to both sides. One side or the

other is sure to be beaten, and the precise maneuver by which the result is attained is seldom known to the public.

WANT OF PREVISION

We are at best an easy-going, pleasure loving people. It is rare that we are duly considerate or fairly thoughtful; altogether too generally we have a silly, childlike way of doing things all through life. It is seldom that we take any pains to be sure that we start right in the first place. Just from our aversion to labor, or to exertion of any kind, we are apt to let things go as they may. As a rule, we are too little concerned about what may possibly happen to ourselves or to other people, and rather than go to the trouble of taking some sensible precautions, we are perfectly willing that the Devil may take the hindmost at any time, provided we ourselves escape unharmed. Very few people are inclined to give matters any serious attention until they notice that something unpleasant has really occurred. To provide beforehand for what may occur, and what we might reasonably expect in advance, is rather exceptional. Even the state, the government, the king, the people, and the Lord himself, seem to be quite remiss in this direction. We settle down with the conviction that we cannot know the future, and so we treat it as a matter in which we have no immediate concern. But this

is a great mistake that we make, among many other mistakes of a similar character. We do know the future, or we may know it, quite as well as we know anything in the world. In fact all that we know that is of any service to us pertains to the future. The past is gone, the present is a myth, and the future alone concerns us. We know all about the future that is really essential to our well being. We do not know the day and dates, it is true, but we know the course of nature, and we can rely upon its being regular and uniform, within certain limits. We know that death will come and old age appear; we know that the seasons will change; we know, too, quite well that as we sow, so we shall reap in every instance. No, we have no lack of knowledge of the future, if we choose to avail ourselves of the lessons that are given us. But we might know very much more of what will surely occur, if we would only study, calculate and inquire. The coming wise man is the one who can best anticipate the happenings of the future.

Ordinarily people do not care to encounter trouble till they reach it. As long as things are going right apparently, most people imagine that all efforts towards a prevention of accidents are quite unnecessary, if not improper. Nobody cares, nobody complains, nobody interferences—as long as nothing happens that is serious. This is the way all through life and in all the affairs of mankind. But let an axle break or a wheel come off; let some man quite unexpectedly lose an arm, or his head perhaps, and a commotion is sure to

follow at once. An unusual noise and stir will be noticed in the bee-hive. Everybody will come out at once to see who is hurt and what has happened. Everybody looks around, takes a peep here and there, and finally comes to the conclusion that there is some accident or catastrophe in town, and something ought to be done. But nothing will be done, because in all such cases it is nobody's funeral finally but that of the ones who were so unfortunate as to be caught in the wreck. In case of a great calamity, the public usually has a spasm, but a spasm is always too sudden and too violent to be lasting. The most that will be done in such instances is to pass some wordy or windy ordinance or by-law, the president of the corporation will endorse it of course—and then people will go and do just as they had been doing all along. Nothing more will be said, and nothing more will be done—till another accident or calamity occurs.

So it is in all the ordinary affairs of man. So it is especially in all matters pertaining to health. We never make any great effort to keep well or to avoid sickness. But when we are prostrated, or perhaps we do not feel well, then we send for the doctor in great haste. That is the way that everybody does usually. What would the people of this country do, if they could not send for a doctor when something happens or somebody is ill? We really could not say.

To what has already been advanced in this connection, we would add this one criticism: Few persons are inclined to take life seriously. Every-

body wants to glide through it or pass it by without giving it any deep thought or studied attention. People generally want to forget that they are living, or at least forget that they are men. This is a sad mistake that we are all inclined to make. *There is nothing for us so worthy of constant thought and attention as life. It is all of life to live, and especially to know how to live.* It is a study that includes all other studies. If we know how to live, what more have we to learn? To live like a sensible man at all times—there can be no higher or worthier ambition for any one.

NEW PLEASURES

Instead of continually striving to discover new pleasures, why should we not learn to enjoy the pleasures that are already at our command? Why not observe and study objects near at hand—watch them and notice how they develop under our observation? We may find something new and interesting any day, and wherever we are—among the flowers, in the foliage, in the scenery, among the birds, with the insects, in our walks every day. Ten thousand beautiful and enjoyable objects are before us and around us, and yet we never notice them for one moment! They do not happen to interest us or strike our fancy. What is more artistically beautiful than the flower of the common alderbush, or of the white or red haw-

thorn, and yet how few ever carefully examine them! We are perpetually looking for hidden things, for things that we never find, and that nobody ever finds; or things at least that are expensive and hard to obtain. But the ordinary things around us, no matter how interesting, we usually overlook, because they are so exceedingly common! A very poor reason indeed. We fail to enjoy because we fail to study and examine. No enjoyment comes to us without some little effort on our part; indeed, it is often our previous effort that gives to enjoyment its real value.

Why not cease working, as we generally do work, without producing any adequate results? We visit too much, we feast and are feasted too much. What is the sense in simply entertaining people? A very large proportion of all the work that civilization demands from both the rich and the poor is done for show, and merely to keep up appearances. Everything is for glory and display, and merely to maintain a name. Unquestionably, we devote too much time and thought to pleasure. We eat for pleasure, we read for pleasure, we play for pleasure. Nothing has any value unless it affords us diversion in some way. It is all enjoyment with us. A large portion of our life, so far as we find it practicable, is given up to the pursuit of what we call happiness. If we could, we should sleep for pleasure and breathe for pleasure. We do not seem to be disposed to meet any of the wants of nature unless we extract pleasure from the operation in some way. We build houses not simply to protect us and keep us from

exposure, but for the beauty that we find in the structure after it is completed. Our clothes are made upon the same principle and with similar objects in view. Articles are esteemed not according to their use and value but according to their cost. No wonder we have to work hard continually to make ends meet, in this country. Every thing seems to be done for our diversion or enjoyment, and nothing is done simply and plainly to meet the ordinary demands of nature. And whither does such a theory or plan of life finally lead us?

Savages do not follow our way at all. They eat simply to appease their hunger, and they hurry to get done with it as soon as possible; while we Christians, with our fancy dishes and numberless courses, extend the meal to inordinate lengths. It is a remarkable fact that the highest aim, and almost the only aim, in civilized life, is pleasure and enjoyment. The old Greeks were the most highly civilized people that the world has ever known. Their constant study was upon lines of beauty, and what they chiefly cultivated was a thirst for pleasure. They had unlimited time for rest and recreation, since they had slaves to do the work. For them, it was vacation season the whole year round. Is it any wonder that the old Greeks surpassed all other people in social crimes and revolting indecencies? However, it must be added that they were honest about all they did; they made no pretensions, and they put forth no efforts to conceal their nakedness in any way. In fact they hardly seemed to realize how scantily attired

they were. What we call wrong, the Greeks called right. That is simply the difference in peoples. What people call right, is right—there is no other standard, either for the virtues or the vices, to be found in the world.

PARASITES

Parasites are strikingly numerous. In fact, we are all parasites, more or less. We all in some way endeavor to live at the expense of others. We live to eat, it may be said, and we eat to live. We are like the whale and the octopus. Our tentacles are always spread out, and we are never so happy as when we catch something and promptly gulp it down. We are a little more particular about quality than our brethren are, the savages, but in the matter of quantity, there seems to be no limit to the demands of our appetite. We are like the silkworm, continually munching and stuffing, and stuffing and munching.

Men are born animals, and they usually remain so all through life. There is nothing that affords them so much satisfaction as the gratification of their appetites.

We are, like the tree, a group of separate individual existences, each intent upon freedom and each seemingly anxious to start in business on its own account at the earliest moment possible. Plants and vines cling to trees and live apparently on nothing. Air plants, it would seem, have noth-

ing for their sustenance but the atmosphere and its moisture. The main business of life, apparently, is merely eating and devouring. It is often a question which is to go down, the parasite or the body to which it clings for support.

Nature teaches one great lesson above all others, and that is the necessity of self-support. Upon this condition alone can life continue for any great length of time. In every case where one individual tries to help its neighbor, it is compelled to neglect its own interests. It must not be forgotten that among men also, every friend, viewed even in the most favorable light, is simply a parasite. He wants others to pay his debts, or to do the work that he, unquestionably, should do himself. It is nice, for the recipient, that we should be obliging, but for ourselves it usually proves to be rather an exhaustive process.

Our whole governmental system, it may be noted, is an organization of parasites. The officers produce nothing; they simply subsist on what others produce. For the public at large, they are an expensive, and more or less unnecessary, paraphernalia. As a rule, they are fat and lazy drones the world over, the Turkish landlord being the type of the class. Their main business is to draw their pay and eat their rations. They are uninvited guests, but they are guests none the less, and their usual place is at or near the head of the table. It is a mistake which the body politic makes, in this and every other country, to toil ceaselessly in order to insure a life of ease and luxury to a set of gentlemanly loungers who are known as the

“government”! Under all systems where organized government is found, the result is practically the same: the multitude does the work and bears the burdens, while the Lord’s anointed feed on the sacrifices and live like nabobs. In principle, it is all royal family, from the king down to the constable. They are all consumers at all times. But there is some consolation to know that such an unjust state of affairs will not exist forever. *There certainly will be a change some day.* The idea that people need and must have “government” is a delusion, and nothing else. Men make their own masters always, and they can unmake them any day they choose.

It may be added that parasitical developments will often be found where we would least expect them. The human body, like every other organization, abounds in parasitic growths, externally and internally. It is well known that most diseases start from the operations of parasites. A cancer is a parasite; so are excrescences generally. They are individuals growing at the expense of the body and sapping its foundations as a living structure. And here is a new thought. Parasites frequently, as has been long known, live for a certain period of their existence in the body of one animal, as the tapeworm does, and finally a certain other part of their existence in the body of another and different animal. The tapeworm, when it is in the body of a human being, is to be counted as an essential part of that being. But was that not as true when the worm was yet in the body of the antecedent animal? Distance,

or apparent separation, has nothing to do with individuality. Our horse is our horse, whether it is in our yard or is a hundred miles away. The fruit, for instance, that we take into our stomach becomes a part of our system. Was it not a part of ourself as well before it was swallowed as after? Or does temporary location change the status or relation of things?

LIFE IN A NEW PHASE

People abound in notions, and a large portion of the conceptions which they form have no foundation in fact. Among these unfounded notions, they have this one in particular, that our knowledge comes, either wholly or mainly, through the medium of the senses; and that those who do not have access to these avenues of knowledge, can hardly be said to live and enjoy life. Never having been blind themselves, they do not know what it is to be blind; and the same may be said of deafness. But this want of experience, with its consequent want of knowledge, does not by any means prevent people from forming their own opinions and stating their own views with great fullness and freedom, on this or any other subject that happens to be presented. It is a curious fact, but one well enough known, that people as a rule do not need knowledge to enable them to form their opinions. A large part of all the opinions that prevail among men have been formed

without knowledge, and in fact, in many cases in direct contravention of the little knowledge which they may have gained in early life.

In this connection, we might refer briefly to the case of Helen Keller. This bright and interesting girl, now grown to be a young woman, was deaf and blind from infancy, and as might be expected, she is also speechless. Bereft as she seemingly is, we are naturally inclined to commiserate the unfortunate being and extend to her our heartfelt sympathies. Here is another case, among thousands of similar instances, where we think we know, or we assume to know, what unquestionably we do not and cannot know. Never having been absolutely blind, or absolutely deaf, how shall we ever be able to put ourself in the position and have the feelings of one who from infancy has been deprived of both these senses?

It is a very difficult thing—it is even quite impossible—to put ourself in the place and condition of other people; and still we are too much inclined to go on expatiating on what we imagine others think and how we believe they must feel. And this is the very feat that we are trying to perform every day, and even every hour, of our lives. In fact we are constantly feeling for other people, and in many cases shedding copious tears over their sorrows and misfortunes, when really, in most instances, our sympathies and polite attentions are not desired. In nine cases out of ten, what is most wanted by those whom we consider to be so stricken and unfortunate is simply to be left alone!

Even Helen Keller does not complain because she lacks some of the senses; she rather rejoices, it is said, that the great human heritage of light, color and song is inalienably hers, even though in this incarnation, she knows them not. She herself appreciates the fact that "the mind of the sightless is, essentially, the same as that of those who see."

It is a great mistake to imagine that Miss Keller is a unique person, a sort of monster perhaps, or nondescript. There are fewer monsters in this world than are commonly supposed. Nothing in all nature is made in vain; no being is wholly perfect, we know, as none is wholly imperfect, but in all cases it will be found that ample compensation, as in the case of Miss Keller, is made for what seems to be lacking. This lady, it is true, cannot see, but defective vision, it must be remembered, is a very common weakness among people, especially those in declining years, and the same is true of the sense of hearing. In the dark, we are all equally blind, and so we are for all points beyond a certain distance. It is not things, but the qualities and quantities of things that distress us. Poison in every case depends upon the quantity taken. It is also a question of more or less, we shall find, when it comes to the subject of failings and bereavements, for all mankind. The sense of smell is often weak, or lost entirely; and taste or touch is frequently left uncultivated. In the uses of the senses of smell and touch, the savage races far surpass the civilized. A red man can detect a white man, wholly by the

sense of smell, without seeing him—just as white people may “smell a mouse” without discerning the little animal.

Miss Keller, as we notice in her book recently published, uses excellent English, and her words are uniformly well chosen. What she writes is plain, concise, direct, quite intelligible and always pleasing. We know indeed that her words have not the same meaning for herself that they have for her readers. But that experience is not exceptional; it is something that happens to every one who writes. No word has precisely the same meaning for any two persons under any circumstances. Every man has his own God, in his own mind, as he has his own picture always of what he sees or imagines.

We notice, among other things, in Miss Keller’s statement, that she is quite philosophic in her reflections, and when she comes to questions of this character, she always states her propositions with great care and in full accordance with the facts of the case:

Not in touch or smell, but in the power of inward vision, does Miss Keller find the essence of life’s experience.

“Our blindness,” she says, “changes not a whit of the course of inner realities. The most beautiful world is always entered *through the imagination.*”

“The real world exists only in the mind.”
“Deafness and blindness do not exist in the immaterial mind, which is philosophically the *real world.*”

Reality, of which visible things are the symbol, shines before my mind."

There is another and still more important view of Miss Keller's case: What man or woman that history mentions ever accomplished so much, with such limited means at command, and under such adverse circumstances, as this brilliant young woman? It is true, kind friends assisted and encouraged her, but how very little it was that even the kindest and most powerful friends could do, in a case apparently so hopeless as that of Helen Keller! She herself did the work which no one else was able to do. It was her genius, her industry, her perseverance, her irresistible will, that brought victory at last.

What a grand lesson this young woman furnishes for those who are willing to learn! What a triumph was hers, and how great her reward! Her joys in this direction can never be appreciated by those who have had no such experience.

To the foregoing review of this case, it may not be amiss to add the following reflections: Unquestionably, we learn nothing from the outside world, though we learn much through the help of those with whom we happen to be thrown in contact. Indeed, we have no means of communicating with the outside world. All beings or creatures have their own peculiar language, and so likewise has every species its dialect. How can two people with different tongues ever come to understand each other? *They never can do so in fact.* They can and do use signs and so they acquire a sort of substitute for knowledge—but they can

never comprehend fully and clearly all that is said.

We have no possible means of ascertaining the feelings and thoughts of other people. We know our own feelings, and we can never pass beyond that limit. We can never ascertain through any possible agency or contrivance how other people feel, or how they think or see.

We have what we call language, but it is very indefinite, generally inaccurate, and as a whole it is extremely unsatisfactory in results. People never understand each other, no matter how much amplification is employed, nor how many words are introduced. We imagine we communicate our thoughts to others, and we come to believe that they actually comprehend what we say, but they rarely do. People can comprehend their own thoughts, and that is as far as they can go. We never even know how far people see or how far they can hear. If we could make others see as we see and understand all that we say, we might soon make them converts to any doctrines that we may have to offer. But every writer and thinker knows that such an achievement is utterly impossible. As words have no exact meaning and no definition that applies specifically in any one case, people are never able to obtain accurate and reliable ideas on any subject.

All that we can do in science and literature that might be of service to others is, by some method, to awaken their attention and develop *their* thoughts. We cannot do their work for them—everybody must do his own work at last, or it must remain undone. The learner who wishes to

be a learner must begin at the bottom, with the elements, and *work up*. Simply to jump up or look up will never answer the purpose. He must go along gradually and be sure to skip none of the intermediate steps. He must study, investigate, reflect.

The reason why people do not accept our teachings is simply because they do not understand us. They not only have not traveled our route, they also have not gone as far as we have. So long as people remain ignorant of our thoughts, feelings, purposes and conceptions, how should we expect for a moment to convert them to a belief in our doctrines? There are really but two ways to make converts and gain followers. One is Mahomet's way, that of killing those who decline to accept the doctrines offered to them, and the other, the modern way, that of striving to induce people to think, study and grow. This is all that will be found practicable in any case. We may do something to set people moving in the right direction, but what more can be done? The modern way of conversion is provokingly slow, but it has the merit of being sensible and just. If people would only allow themselves to grow, regularly and naturally, there need be no doubt that the truth would come to them, as it does to others, in due season.

The danger is not that people will not think right, it is rather, if we may judge by the past, that *they will not think at all*. They will not work their own land, and so they let it to those who will work. Just so when it comes to the business

of thinking. They farm that out to people who are glad to do the thinking for them. But this, it will be found, is a dangerous step to take. Want of thought gives the country slaves instead of skilled and industrious workmen. Those who are allowed to do the thinking and planning for the world are always its masters.

The case of Miss Keller reminds us of asking when we may be called fortunate, and when unfortunate? When may we be called sick, and when are we really well, when free from aches and ailments of all kinds? What shall we consider a positive good, and what an unqualified or unmitigated evil? Some people are always unfortunate, because they believe themselves unfortunate. Some are always sending for the doctor and are anxious to try some new prescription. They feel sick simply because they think they are sick, believe they are sick. If people could be made to believe in some way that they were well, they would never think that they were sick. Everything comes to us as we happen to feel. The favors of this world come to those who deserve them, and who are prepared to receive and enjoy them. They are not confined to any one group nor to any particular individual. It is a serious error to believe that the race is always to the swift, or the battle to the strong. Dead force is of no great account; the question is, how is the force handled and where is it applied?

We must begin—and we should begin early—to take a new view of life. When we come down to the real facts of the case, this is either a bad world or a good world—it cannot be both, or part of one and part of the other. A man is not bad because he occasionally does a bad thing. Taking up the question of health again, when are we sick and when are we well? Are we not always sick and are we not always well? There is always some trouble to complain of. So it is with the affairs of this world generally. We can find plenty of things that are wrong, if we only imagine they are wrong. Helen Keller is quite right in her proposition: “*The real world exists only in the mind.*” If we feel blue, the world looks blue, and if we feel happy, everything appears agreeable.

It should not be forgotten for a moment that no distinct or undisputed line has ever been drawn between what we may call evil and what we may call good. As we have said over and over again, it is solely a matter of opinion, in this case, as it is with other ideas that we have formed of things. Beyond all doubt, what is good for one is bad for another, and what one man pronounces excellent, another man speaks of in anything but favorable terms. What is a poison at one time, or in one case, is a medicine at another. We are too apt to call things evil because they involve a loss of property or are a source of pain and inconvenience. But if evil were to be established on such a basis as this, where would the conclusion finally lead us? The medicines we take are often the cause of nausea, and the surgeon with his merciless knife

cuts and carves without any seeming regard for the sufferings of his patient. The doctor often kills in his efforts to save, and nature frequently does the same thing. Properly considered, every disease operates along the line of a remedy, though of course not always with success. However, there is no doubt that the tendency in nature of every so called evil is to produce a desirable result. We need storms just as much as we need fair weather, and it is quite as natural and quite as regular to be ill as to be well, and to die as it is to be born.

There is no wrathful God—no place to put such a being, and no office for him to perform. The Devil himself has long been looked upon with distrust, and he has now come to be totally disregarded by all intelligent men. We find it wiser to act in harmony with nature than to run counter to its methods and teachings. To improve the world, it is only necessary for us *to improve ourselves*. We call the world bad merely because it looks bad to us. We have a constant tendency to mourn for the unfortunate, when if we understood their cases better, we should find them often enjoying life better than we do ourselves. The happiest people as a body are usually those who are found in mad-houses and idiot asylums. The true sources of happiness are found in our mind, and the avenues that lead therefrom are numerous. An insane man is not necessarily an unfortunate being. Indeed, it is hard to draw the line between the mad-man and the man of genius. Those who reach the ecstatic state, like Mahomet, Schopenhauer, Beaconsfield and Comte, might well be classed with

those who have periodic spasms or spells. Almost every so called great man comes to be troubled finally with an affection known as "enlargement of the head."

Is it possible to change the state of a man's mind, and consequently his direction in life? It certainly is. Food will have that effect, so will drink, so will hypnotic influences of all kinds. A very small thing will sometimes lead to a very important change in this direction. Education, if it is of the right kind and applied at the right time and in the right manner, will be found to be efficacious, but only provided that the impression which it leaves is not negatived by some other and more lasting impression coming from some other source. But education, be it remembered, is the work of a life time; and even then when the end of the career is reached, how often are we amazed at the littleness of results and the utter lack of anything like an attainment or an achievement! The great mistake that people make, the old and the young alike, lies in the belief that their education properly ends with a certain number of years in school and college. If they would develop thought on this subject and come to view the matter aright, they would understand that this is really the time when their education properly begins—after they have left the seminary or college and have come to take their place in the world.

As we have already noticed, it is very important that we should have correct views in regard to all matters in which we have any special con-

cern. As is well known, a large portion of the ills and misfortunes of life arise from an unfortunate misapprehension on our part as to the plans and purposes of nature. Too many people start out with the unwarranted assumption that the world was made for man, and for him exclusively. Indeed, such an intimation is found in the early chapters of our Bible. But it is a manifest error. There is absolutely no evidence to be found anywhere to sustain the doctrine that it is the plan of nature in any case to make one thing for another. If nature has any plans at all, one of them certainly is, that everything should stand upon its own platform, and that living creatures should depend upon their own energies for their continued subsistence. When these energies are finally exhausted, the animal sinks and dies, and no power on earth is able to add a day to its allotted period of existence.

Over and over again we have seen that most of our troubles arise from some unfortunate view that we are accustomed to take of things. When we are constantly looking for troubles, we are sure to find them, in our travels, sooner or later. We are always talking about "the battle of life." We seem to find battles, as Martin Luther found devils, everywhere. This is not remarkable, it is simply natural. It will be noticed that devils seldom bother ordinary people. If we notice a river flowing peacefully and steadily down toward the sea, we cannot avoid observing what a struggle it has and what obstacles it must encounter, on its journey day after day! Starting out with

this mournful thought, we cannot help but feel sad to think of this unfortunate river. And so it is with the "battle of life." We are always finding struggles where none really exist. If we find something in our way, all we have to do is to go quietly over it or around it, as the river does. It is not at all necessary for the river to wait until the obstacle is removed.

People are apt to have too much feeling, too many apprehensions; they are too intellectual, they think and know too much, and as a result they multiply their pains and sorrows far beyond due measure. There is nothing at all wrong about obstacles. They have their place in nature quite as well as we have. We ourselves are often obstacles in the way of other creatures or things. Troubles can readily be found, if you start out to search for them and make of the matter a study. Some people get into trouble simply as a result of the exalted opinion that they have formed of themselves, their importance and value.

There is indeed one serious obstacle in our pathway that we cannot fail to recognize, and this is our Bible. As a book of life for those living in this advanced age, and having such tastes, feelings and interests as we have, such a volume, at this time, is worse than worthless. Very true it is, few, if any, read the book for guidance or instruction, but we have, with the rest of mankind, inherited the teachings and doctrines that have come down from past centuries, and it is impossible to cast these aside just now, even if such might be our desire. For a people situated as we are, the laws

and lessons found in the Bible are a sad misfit. These mandates and dogmas date back hundreds, and perhaps thousands of years, and no matter how excellent they may have been at some time and for some places, they do not answer our purpose at present. We should realize the fact, and act upon it, *that no law or precept is good for all time*; and to prevent friction and resistance, we must change our laws from time to time, so as to have them correspond with the advancement of the age.

The reformation which Mahomet introduced, six hundred years after Christ, was a far greater success as a religion than that which is supposed to have been inaugurated by Moses for the Israelites. It was well adapted, not for the wants and circumstances of all peoples, but for such an eastern race as that for which the Koran was intended. This book has unity and power, and it furnishes to-day the fundamental law for nearly two hundred millions of people. As a code, it has been, and is still, an astonishing success.

THE MATTER OF EVIDENCE

The subject of proof, of evidence or testimony, we have touched upon casually as we passed along in this work, but it is something that deserves special attention and separate treatment, so that it may be understood or accepted at its full value, and that the reader may not be deceived in the impressions that may be left on his mind.

It will readily be perceived, even on slight inspection, that in all matters of evidence and belief we take everything on trust. Sometimes we trust our own senses, and sometimes the testimony of other people. Our belief, our thoughts, our impressions, are wholly the result of testimony of some kind. And yet how indifferent we are on this very important subject! We never have any established convictions as to what is and what is not trustworthy testimony. Some people accept one thing as proof, and others require testimony of a different character. The peculiarity noticeable in all evidence is the fact that it is never final or irresistible. We are in all cases free to believe or disbelieve as we choose, and as we have seen, what is evidence for one is not evidence for another. The whole matter of belief or disbelief rests with the individual inquirer himself.

In olden times, people were always believing in signs and symptoms. They had some confidence in what their friends said, but they had more confidence in signs and prodigies, since these they believed to be really the work of God. In the time of Christ, people were always looking for a sign, as a prognostication of what was about to come. Among the Romans, the people were constantly observing the flight of birds, as they examined the entrails of victims, to ascertain what might be expected. It might be noticed that even at this late day, we also believe in the flight of birds. We judge of the coming weather by the flight of wild geese, noticing whether they are moving toward or away from the great waters of the north.

We also place great reliance upon the testimony that we find laid down in the almanacs and newspapers. Surely, men will never cease to believe in signs. It is cheap testimony, but it is generally accepted.

Many people still believe in witches, because they notice the signs and believe the testimony. If a cow is found to be bewitched, as still happens occasionally, it must be the work of some witch. The only question is, who is the witch? It is true that everybody does not believe in witches now as people did formerly, but that is because they do not attend to the evidence. They had witches in early Bible times. Why not witches now? There is just as much testimony in that direction now as ever there was. The only trouble is that people are so incredulous!

It is surprising how much trust we place in very slight evidence. When we really desire to believe something, almost any evidence will answer, and in certain cases no evidence at all is required. Many cases in court are decided without evidence, and sometimes even against evidence. The judge, it will be remembered, is just like any ordinary mortal. He can believe what evidence he likes, and reject all the rest. He can decide the case without evidence, as people often do in common life. *And yet men are hanged or beheaded, or perhaps imprisoned, by the order of just such a court as that!* It seems all right till you come to look the matter all over and view the subject in its true light. *And then how monstrous this tragedy appears as it is enacted day after day in civilized life!*

What was done in the last days of Robespierre is done over and over again to-day in every civilized land on the globe. There is more regard for appearances to-day—that is all. People are hung or beheaded to-day just as they were in the Reign of Terror, either with or without evidence, for no other reason in the world than *to get them out of the way*. After one's enemies are dead, they cease to be troublesome. That is the theory on which the executioner acts, and so it is that another head goes into the basket. No crimes were ever committed more horrible than those which have had the hearty approval of God and the generous sanction of law. We are all, be it remembered, faithful followers of the Lord!

It is well to bear in mind that there is no such thing as indubitable evidence. It is always circumstantial in its character, and its only office is to lead to an impression of some kind. The whole case is decided finally by the court, and that means simply the will or wishes of the judge. It is a serious error to suppose that suits at law, or questions in common life, are decided uniformly on valid testimony. They are often decided against testimony, upon the whims, the fancy, the prejudices, or perhaps the interest of the court. It too often happens that the testimony given is a small factor in the case. What finally settles the question, is how the court happens to feel about the matter, or how he views the case—and so it is in all the affairs of life. Our fate, everybody's fate, depends upon *how people happen to look at things*.

And yet we love to talk about our fondness

for truth, and our readiness at all times to fight for justice! As a matter of fact, the truth that we love is that which favors our side of the case, and the same may be said of justice. We talk much about evidence—most people do—and yet they have but a child's view of its true character and history. As a general thing, people are so anxious to have their enemies punished, and to have those put away whose presence is not agreeable, that they will do almost anything to accomplish their purposes. They do not wait to have their enemies proved guilty. They have them arrested, and often put in irons or in jail, before any evidence whatever is produced. They want to see if the offender cannot be pronounced guilty in some way, by the court. After that, all is easy enough—just like rolling down hill, the force of gravity furnishing the required power. It should be borne in mind that the chief office of the criminal court, with its Middle Age processes, is to punish the enemies of those in power and to favor their friends as far as practicable. Wherein does such action differ, in theory and practice, from the Inquisition? *The courts are too often the instruments with which wicked men carry out their designs.* As a rule, in court matters, we see only the results. We rarely perceive the iniquitous methods by which these results are attained. We should hardly expect to find such relics as instruments of torture placed on exhibition in some front room. Such things are rarely made conspicuous in any country, and still there was a time, not so very long

ago, when they were deemed quite indispensable in certain European trials.

The weakest point in the whole matter of evidence lies in the fact, well enough established, that too high an estimate is usually placed upon the quantity of evidence, while little regard is given to the quality. In practice, the word of one man counts for as much as that of another man, no matter how much or how little he knows, for witnesses as a rule have a common rank and belong to one class. And yet we know very well that one man may be a good, and another a very poor judge of the matter in question, and so one would make a reliable witness, while another would not. Merely because a man says a thing is so or not so, is *no evidence at all*. We must first know all about the man himself who appears as a witness. Even a good clock may keep very poor time. It may need repairs, and so it is with witnesses. They do not always tell the truth, either in court or out. The question is: What do they know, and what is their history?

As to the value of an oath, we have come to the time when what a man swears to is no stronger or better than what he simply affirms. As to the Bible on which witnesses make oath, almost any other book would answer just as well. The truth does not come from the Bible but from the witness himself. Some people prefer relics on which to make oath, but they can hardly be recommended.

Proof establishes nothing, demonstrates nothing. If anything is true, it is so without proof and before proof is produced; and again, if a proposi-

tion is not true in the first place, no amount of evidence or logic or manipulation will ever make it true. Evidence is an extraneous matter and has nothing to do, practically, with the question at issue. *Proof is merely a sort of contrivance or combination by which the minds of men are influenced.* Facts never prove themselves. Evidence must come from the outside, from independent sources. Proof lies not in facts demonstrated but in mere signs or circumstances that are supposed to lead to a conviction on the part of the one who is to decide the question.

It is a remarkable fact well known to all observing men, that in our courts a man may be sent to prison or the gallows, for crime, on evidence that would not suffice for the collection of an ordinary debt. A man may be convicted of crime on circumstantial evidence, on mere suspicion, when there is nothing better at command; but to prove a debt or a claim to property requires evidence of the most direct and positive character.

Proof, by which the reality of things is supposed to be established, ought to be found at the bottom, while as a matter of fact it is uniformly found at the surface. We call it proof, but we never know whether it is so or not. At best it is merely what somebody thinks or somebody says. *No proof goes beyond that.* How sad it is that the fate of men, of all men, should depend entirely on what other men think or say! There must be something radically wrong in a system that takes such proof as that for the basis of evidence. This system assumes that every witness is both compe-

tent and honest. It seems to be forgotten that it is as natural for men to lie, on occasion, as to speak the truth. What is more common than perjury in law trials? And yet perjured testimony answers as well as any other, so long as it stands unchallenged.

The time will doubtless come when we shall have no such word as truth, because there will be no use for it. People will not speak of good and evil, right and wrong, true and false; they will know no such distinctions. They are hardly known to-day among the uncivilized races.

A few excerpts from an essay on Human Testimony by Dr. George M. Beard, in *Popular Science Monthly*, 1878, will doubtless serve to strengthen the positions taken in this work, and they are given here:

On every page of the writings of the Tübingen school, as De Wette, Bauer, Paulus, Strauss, we find evidence of the imperative need of a reconstruction of the principles of evidence.

Nearly all the acquisitions and experiences of life are forgotten, even by the best memories—yet judgment is largely the result of memory. (Good judgment without a good memory is impossible.)

Human testimony comes from the human brain. The best results of cerebral activity are largely involuntary, if not unconscious.

With children, as with adults, life is but a series of unremembered experiences.

All boasted human learning is a temporary treasure, a loan, rather than a permanent gift. Scholarship consists in knowing *where* knowledge can be found.

Great advances in science are not made in courts of justice.

(Even where people do remember, they do not do so with accuracy or completely. Only a few things are grasped by any observer.)

It is not the eye, but the brain behind the eye, that sees. When our youths are taught, as in the near future they must be, that the larger portion of historical literature is of no worth to those who seek for the truth from that source, the process of education will be much simplified. The area of what has hitherto passed for "sound learning" will be greatly restricted.

The historical writings of Prescott and Irving are especially open to criticism. They are to be considered as fiction. The best novels are better histories than much of professed history.

The world's greatest follies and darkest untruths have always some justly honored authority, in theology, in literature, in philosophy, in law, and in science itself—a Mathew Hale, a Lord Bacon, a Wesley, a Cotton Mather, an Elliot, a Hare, a Lardner, an Emerson, an Agassiz—to stand by their bedside, armed with syllogisms, trusting their senses (as usual), and conscientiously striving to nurse them back to vigorous life.

There are no superstitions so superstitious as the superstitions of scientific men.

It is said that it is "easier to dupe a clever man than a fool."

Sir William Hamilton asks very pertinently, "Of what account are the most venerated opinions, *if they be untrue?* At best they are only venerable delusions."

CONVICTIONS AND CONVERSIONS

Much of what is said under this head will be found scattered here and there on other pages of this work. In this article, the thought will be found somewhat elaborated, and the evidence will be so arranged and it will be presented in such orderly connection as to leave a more lasting impression upon the mind of the reader.

All that we have in this world, all that we know, and all that we have to rely upon in the affairs of life is simply our convictions, our impressions, our belief and opinions. There are for us no facts or truths beyond what we find in our impressions. And whence do these come, how do they arise and how are they directed and controlled? The answer to these questions will appear to a greater or less extent as we proceed in the treatment of the subject.

In the first place, it is a fact beyond all doubt that our ideas are never matters of ordinary traffic and transfer. They are not articles of bargain and

sale, and they cannot be passed from hand to hand or from soul to soul. A man may be educated, as a plant may be cultivated, but in all education, no matter what form it takes nor how long it lasts, there is nothing *that ever passes from the teacher to the taught*. No person, young or old, can by any possibility get outside of or beyond the boundaries of his own soul. That fact is established beyond all question. Education is development, and it is never anything but development. If we did not have the seeds of all knowledge within us, how should we ever be able to know or to acquire knowledge? How should we ever be able to obtain new oaks, if there were no acorns in the first place? It must be evident that education, like all knowledge, must be something that grows, and where there is no plant to begin with, there can be no progress or development. Again, there are wireless communications that are passing and re-passing about us daily, and yet we fail to notice them. We are like the ships that do not possess the required apparatus to enable them to receive the messages that are sent out by wireless telegraphy. So there are many things that we fail to see, simply because of the feebleness of our vision.

As to conversions, I am confident that they are different always from what people ordinarily suppose they are. No man is ever actually renewed, or changed into a new being. He may, under certain influences, develop new traits and present new symptoms, but it will be found on closer acquaintance, with persistent inquiry, that he remains the same creature that he was for-

merly. So, a locomotive may leave its accustomed track, and start off on a journey into the country. But it will be found that it makes no progress, because it is working in a new field under new conditions. However, the locomotive remains the same complicated piece of machinery under all circumstances, and if it cannot travel, it can come to a standstill. It has not changed, and it cannot change, its original character in the slightest degree. So it is with a new convert to some new religion. He changes much less than he is commonly supposed to have done. He has some new symptoms, some new notions perhaps, but he remains the same Hindoo or African native that he was in the beginning.

We find it generally stated as a matter of history that in the early centuries of the Christian era the Pagans of Italy and Gaul were converted to Christianity, but it just begins to dawn upon the mind of the modern inquirer that perhaps the Christian was in fact converted, more or less, to Paganism; for it is certain that this great change worked downward as well as upward, and it is not at all strange that there are many inquirers to-day who look upon Christianity as at best only an improved form of Paganism. It unquestionably has many Pagan features.

It must be evident enough that the only conversion that comes anywhere near being effective, is that which begins early in life and is carried on both persistently and intelligently for a long time, through the medium of teaching and education. If we wish to impress others with our ideas, teach-

ing is the only medium we can use with any great promise of success. We may endeavor to lead the learner along our lines, and as we pass on call his attention to things that are important here and there, but we can do little more. It is useless to attempt to convert adults to our new doctrines unless they are very susceptible and are quite favorably inclined to our views in the first place.

Right here it may be well to remind the reader how apt he is, as we all are, to forget or ignore important principles that we know are well established; and since we forget or ignore them, we fail to apply them at the times and in the manner we should. It would seem that no sound thinker or careful observer would question for a moment this doctrine, that we know or think of no qualities of objects save those which we ourselves assign to them. How other people may regard these same objects we really do not know and do not care. We have opinions of things, and only opinions. Whether we are right or wrong in our judgment, or our impressions, is a matter of no moment. They are our opinions, and we are fully entitled to them. For us they must be true. If men cannot rely upon their ideas and opinions, what is there in all this world in which they should have confidence? As we have often intimated before, *opinions in life are all that the best and ablest of men have*. If we could change the opinions of people readily, we should have an easy time of life; but let it not be forgotten that *opinions are the last things to change*. An opinion is the only reality there is in practical life.

It may be well to add that opinions can never be based on authority, for authority is never a source of evidence. The only evidence upon which we can rely is our own ideas and impressions. Evidence is always internal, not external. What we have not come to feel we are not able to believe. The testimony of a peasant, so far as his knowledge and experience goes, is just as good as that of a king. Really, we can prove nothing for others. We can appeal to their reason and common sense, but with our best efforts, we can go no farther.

But if men could be induced to accept and approve the doctrines set forth in the two preceding paragraphs, what a new and different view they would form of the world about them and of the ordinary affairs of life! They would bear in mind the fact that things are not actually so and so; they only appear so to us. How things appear to others, is for us a very unimportant matter. We call this a cold day—others may not. But have we not the right to our opinions at all times? We certainly have, provided we give it merely as our opinion and nothing more. The author of this work is very positive in every statement he has made in the book. He has always been studious and observing, and he has been extremely careful in every line that he has written; but he does not pretend for a moment that he has given to the world, in any instance, anything more than *one man's opinion*.

We are living on opinions constantly, and only on opinions. They change like the clouds and the weather, at all times. However, there is noth-

ing so potent with man as an opinion, so long as it lasts. There is never any lack of opinions under any circumstances, for when one opinion disappears, there are always a half dozen others ready to take its place. A man's convictions, we know, dominate his whole life. How shall he change his opinions? Nobody knows, he himself does not know, how or when it is done. It is not knowledge that changes a man's convictions, at least not necessarily. A man may have light and still not see; he may have knowledge and never use it. He might lay it aside, as he would his hat or his coat, and forget all about it. That is often done. It is often a mere freak or fancy that leads people to change their opinions, and with their opinions, their course of life. Opinions may last for centuries, and they may continue only for a day. To-day it is democracy that is in favor, to-morrow it is a monarchy, and the day following, chaos perhaps. For a time it is the church that we adore, and then it is the state, and finally it is education that takes precedence. There is absolutely no way to tell what will rank highest next week or next year in the minds of men.

It must not be forgotten that all our sorrows, as well as all our pleasures, come from the opinions we form of things. If we come to regard things as pleasant, they are pleasant, and so in every case where we are either pleased or displeased. What troubles us always is not things, but the opinion that we have formed of things. Likes and dislikes are much more changeable than the moon. Sometimes we are easily psychologized

either one way or the other, and what we cherish fondly one day we actually abhor the next. But even the mere child ought to be impressed with the fact that it does not follow for one moment that because some one dislikes a thing, therefore it is bad, or the reverse. It is only an opinion or a fancy in either case, and a fancy has no value for any one except the one in whose mind it arose originally.

It may be remarked, finally, that our belief not only induces us to accept certain evidence as fact, but it also leads us to accept certain doctrines as truth which are really not truth. Through our belief, and the conceptions we have formed, we come to endorse the doctrine of destiny and necessity. But it is well to bear in mind, in the beginning, when we consider this question, that *necessity* is always a creation of man. There is no necessity that controls a man's action except so far as he believes there is. When we say a thing is necessary, all that we possibly can mean is that we believe or think it is necessary. As in every other case, it is wholly a matter of opinion. So it is in obeying our master. We *think* we must, but it is merely a thought or opinion of ours. If we did not allow ourselves to think that masters are necessary, we never should have any. So, again, we think we must surrender to our antagonist. But if we did not happen to think so, he never could conquer us with all his power. Surrender is always a matter of choice and will, and it is never because a man must. One man is never in the power of another man. He may be killed,

but that does not put him in anybody's power. He might be carried away like a piece of wood, but even that would not compel him to speak or even to move his hand. *People are never compelled to do anything.* We always do at last what we choose to do, decide to do, even though our choice may be one of two evils.

It is a fact well known to us all that our convictions and conduct are governed wholly by our opinions, and yet how seldom is this principle applied in our ordinary work! If we could only change our opinions of things how readily and how rapidly our daily practices would change! Our notions of crimes and punishments have their origin wholly in our opinions. Crime itself, as we all know, is exclusively a matter of opinion. What is a crime with some people is quite innocent and harmless among others. We read the history of the Inquisition and we are shocked at the hideous crimes perpetrated, in the early centuries, in the name of God, by those who really believed they were rendering Him worthy service. We look upon the judges and executioners of those days as monsters. But how much different, or how much better, are the courts, the judges, the juries and the executioners of the present day? We agree fully with Lincoln Steffens that "Our whole penal system is wrong. The whole penal system is unnecessary, and it has been proven unnecessary." Men are governed exclusively by their ideas of things, which, unfortunately, are almost always wrong.

It does well to remember that at heart the

people of one age, or of one country, do not differ very materially from those of any other age or any other country. No man was ever so wicked that he could not furnish some excuse for his conduct. All people are moved, at least at times, by prejudices, by passions, by avarice, and often by ignorance and superstition. Those who instituted the Inquisition and who for so long a period carried on its fearful work, were no doubt honored men and faithful followers of the Lord. They believed in the justice of their cause, as everybody does, and they felt the necessity of destroying the enemies of religion whenever they were encountered. We to-day, the people of this and every other country, are actuated by the very same spirit when we are called upon to act upon questions affecting the safety of the church or state. We believe we must continue to do as we are doing, or society will decline and the race ultimately perish. The Christians of the Middle Ages were troubled with similar apprehensions. They believed that heretics must be removed, or the church would go down and humanity would be ruined forever. Besides, they wanted the goods of the rich, and they wanted them promptly.

Wherein do our criminal courts, in the spirit that moves them and the course they uniformly pursue, differ from the Inquisition? We have our criminal trials, with most of the principal features of the Inquisition, in order to ascertain the *truth*. That is at least what we pretend; and and the zealous and faithful Christians of the Middle Ages said precisely the same thing. They

usually wanted some man's money, and to secure that they wanted the victim out of the way. But they pretended they were *searching for the truth*, as we pretend in every lawsuit that we have at the present day. They of the early centuries named and defined their own crimes, and they determined the quality and the quantity of evidence required to ensure conviction. Why should they not succeed in convicting the accused, especially as the court was pretty generally on the side of the prosecution? What difference do we notice in practice in our criminal courts of the present day? There is really little difference, except that the judges are more intelligent, less bigoted and fairer every way than the judges of other days. We make our own laws and manipulate the evidence in the case to suit the fancy of the court, just as they did in the days of John Huss. We even resort to torture to-day to compel the accused to confess the crime and save ourselves the trouble of proving his guilt—as they did in other days.

The criminal court, in this country as in England, is in itself a tremendous power. It is practically irresistible, and because of its zeal and pertinacity alone, thousands and thousands are sent to prison or the gallows. By way of punishment, men are often removed in some effective way because others are afraid of them, and often because the court happens either to dread or detest them. Fear and cupidity, in this world, are the source of a large share of our sins.

And yet it must not be forgotten for a moment that it is with crime as it is with everything else,

a question of how we look at it—*wholly how we look at it*. We can make any act a crime by calling it such, or by believing it to be such. After all, people are bad only in so far as we believe them so. Sending a man to prison proves nothing. No intelligent man imagines that all are there who belong there; or that those who are in are a whit less innocent than many of those who are out. It is only their misfortune to have been detected, that is all.

When will people begin to realize that men are not now running about freely in our community for the reason that they are innocent. No, no, there are very few such, as we may find when the subject comes to be investigated. The first question is, what do you call crime, and why do you call it so? Much depends on the proper answer to that question to begin with. Personally, I have no love for a bad man, any more than I have for a crazy man. But in any and every case, I believe in *treating a man fairly*. He should not lose his rights merely because interested people happen to call him a criminal.

THE CORRECT WAY

Will people ever be able to get into their heads the evident fact that nothing is really right and nothing is really wrong, nothing is really true and nothing is really false? The trouble in this case, as in thousands of other cases, lies in the fact

that we never have a correct view of things in the first place. We imbibe an idea or notion early in life, or in some way it comes into our possession, and the notion continues with us till the end of our existence. So we have notions of truth and right. We not only believe, but we feel certain, that truth and right are everlasting and unchangeable things; and we are confident that they are something for every day in the week and for every man and woman in the world. But every true thinker soon learns that truth and right have no such character now, nor have they had at any time in the past. Truth and right are merely for to-day, and for a limited number of people only.

Nothing is more ephemeral than these very things which we are now considering. They are merely what people think and believe, and in fact they are only notions and opinions. Usually they are thoughts and conceptions accepted and adopted by a few people, a few families perhaps, for a brief time, while other people or other races condemn them as silly notions or as wicked and abominable doctrines. Again, it may be repeated that the question of what is right and what is true depends wholly upon our thoughts or ideas, and as these thoughts happen to change, so the character of right and truth changes. Is it strange that our notions of these things are constantly varying, and they are as changeable as the winds and the weather? What men believe to be right is right, and what they believe to be wrong is wrong, for them.

To carry this investigation still farther, let

us consider this important question. What is the correct way of spelling words? What is the correct way of pronouncing words, or where is the proper location of the accent? Indeed, is there any one way that is more correct, in any proper sense, than some other way? The spelling of words, like everything else that is done by man, is not governed by law, but by fashion and custom. In the last instance, the man who writes the words is the one who spells them, and he spells them, as he does other things, as he feels, or as he knows or chooses. What does a man do when he goes to the tailor to have a coat made? He selects the cloth himself and he dictates the style to be followed. He may select the prevailing style or he may ignore it entirely. Perhaps he does not even know what the fashion really is, and so he goes on and has his coat cut and made as he chooses. Just so it is in spelling words. There is a fashion in orthography, as there is in tailoring and dress-making, but no one is obliged to follow the fashion. Any man is at liberty to go on and spell his words as he likes, and that is what very many people do. So far as correctness goes, one way is just as near right as another. It is just as proper to spell words according to sound as it is to spell according to the fashion of the day.

It may not be generally known, but it is a fact, that before the time when the printing press came into general use, there was no established orthography for words even among literary men. No one had the authority to make laws on this sub-

ject, and so there was no law to be followed. The question was simply unsettled. Words originally were spelled variously, not only in the same book, but in the same chapter and on the same page of the work. In one of the older versions of the New Testament, our pronoun *it* was spelled in eight different ways: *it, itt, yt, ytt, hit, hitt, hyt, hytt*.

What is true of orthography is also true of pronunciation and accent. *Fashion*, custom, fancy, is the only law that is recognized.

The orthography is only the dress or mask in which a word is presented. The word itself we never see or know; what we do see is simply the form or dress in which it appears in print. It is with words as it is with other things; we do not see them or know them, we see only what is supposed to represent them. What we call a house is merely the idea of a house presented as a combination of wood, nails and mortar. The idea of the house, the real house, existed as a design before a single step was taken towards the construction of the building. So the idea will remain long after the building decays and disappears. Ideas are imperishable; they go out of fashion, but they are never lost. Ideas live with those who survive us, or with those who follow us.

We also speak of the correct meaning of words, as if there were also incorrect meanings. All the meanings that any word has are simply those which men assign to them. So it is with things right and things wrong. Things are right that people call right, and what one calls right

another calls wrong. Right is what we see in things; and the things that we see, others often fail to see.

A FEW WORDS ON EVOLUTION

In a work like this, treating as it does chiefly on things true and things untrue, or of things founded on fact and things founded on fiction, no doubt something ought to be said on the subject of Evolution. This subject has been under consideration a long time, and almost everybody who has an opinion worth putting into print has already hastened to define his position and explain his views on this very intricate problem. The public generally knows very little of the "true inwardness" of the question, but the opinion has come to prevail that "evolution"—whatever it may be—is a good thing to encourage in both schools and families. Indeed, for the uninitiated, evolution has come to be regarded as synonymous with progress, and many have formed the idea that without it, true advancement would be quite difficult, if not impossible. But it is well to remember that evolution is only an hypothesis, either well-founded or not, and we have had something of that kind at intervals from the first days of creation down to the present moment.

Theories among men of learning are very common things, and they come in at certain times, like "wireless messages," in a steady stream. It

is very rare that the truth of these theories is ever demonstrated. Like comets, they rise above the horizon quite unexpectedly, and after a brief career they disappear, and that is the last of them. It is seldom that they are spoken of afterward. The Nebular Hypothesis is one of them, and plenty of others may be found, in books, of the same kind. They are nothing but dreams, but they afford a delightful pastime for those who have a lively imagination. There is truth in everything, and no doubt there is truth in "evolution," but the yield cannot be said to be large. It is not proposed at this time to discuss the question fully. There is no occasion for such an effort, and the space required might better be used for other purposes. A few ideas will be given in reference to growth and development, and incidentally to evolution, and that must suffice for the present.

This subject of growth, development and metamorphosis is extremely interesting at all times. But do we understand the question fully, or even partially? That is much to be doubted. In this case, as in all similar cases, what we have is an idea, an impression, an opinion that we have acquired in some way, and that is the extent of our attainments in this direction. What does a body do when it grows? When does identity begin, and where does it end? We say a body changes. Wherein does it change? When does a body cease to be what it was, and really become something different from itself? How could such a thing take place at any time or in any manner? When A becomes B, or John becomes James, or six

changes to seven, what actually becomes of A, John and six? They must cease to exist, *because they have lost their identity.*

If things really cease to exist, they cannot change, they cannot become something different from themselves. To have six change to seven, or John to James, *and still remain what they were all along*, is a dream that exists nowhere save in the brain of man. We can think of changes, but we can never find them in our daily walks. We can talk about an ape developing into a man, but when or where did such a thing occur, or *how did it come about?* Almost anybody would be glad to know the whole facts of such an interesting case. He would be anxious to learn all the particulars.

We hold this proposition to be self-evident: *Nothing changes; nothing can change.* Everything in nature remains what it was at birth. It may meet with mishaps, it may be pressed here and damaged there, it may be shattered to pieces, and even then *it does not change its character.* We talk about change, but when we come to final results, we always perceive at last that change is found only in fiction. A castle may fall to ruin after a lapse of centuries, and still remain the castle that it was to the last. The castle and the stones that enter into the structure are not one and the same thing; a man may carry the stones away, and still not have the castle. Warwick castle would not be Warwick castle if its location were changed to that of Stirling castle—and certainly not if its form were changed.

It is very generally assumed among our

learned men that nature has a plan, a model, which it follows more or less faithfully in all its works. But this is pure imagination; there is no proof to sustain such a theory, and there never has been. This conception of a plan implies a mental operation and it involves a comparison of different objects and features. It also involves reflection. But nature does not reflect, does not think, does not compare. It builds one thing, in one place, at one time, and when its work is completed, it presents to the world a new individual, a new creation in a perfect form, independent of every other form and every other individual in creation.

According to man, the serpent and the elephant are alike vertebrates belonging to a common class or order, and developed by nature according to one and the same plan. But judged from nature's standpoint, no two individuals could be wider apart, or separated by a broader chasm, than the two classes just named. They have some analogies, some points of resemblance, but even their analogous features are, strictly speaking, dissimilarities.

The paddles of seals, the pectoral fins of fishes, the wings of birds, and the forefeet or fore-arms of quadrupeds are in a certain sense homologous. And yet where could we find differences more pronounced than in such comparisons? The similarities exist in our mind, and not in the objects themselves. To the uninitiated, no similarity is evident in these instances.

So, again, with the covering of animals. The fur of bears, the spines of the porcupine, the bris-

tles of swine, the feathers and quills of birds, and perhaps the scales of fishes, are all analogous, or homologous, or at least in many respects similar, but in no instance does one take the place of another. A hog that has bristles never has feathers, and though a bird may have feathers on one part of the body and down, or bristles or quills, on another part, it never has one in the place where another properly belongs. So fur-bearing animals have coats of varying fineness, and about the neck and mouth bristles are common.

The tusks of the boar, like those of the elephant, are supposed to be modified teeth. But they are not teeth, and they never were. They resemble teeth only in a few particulars, but they fill the place, or perform the office, of something very different from teeth. The trunk of the elephant is said to be a development of the nose and upper lip, but properly speaking it is not a development at all. It is unique in character and there is nothing like it in nature. And so it will be found to be with all other so-called developments. It is a fact well understood that the ordinary nose of one animal never becomes the proboscis of some other animal, and to undertake to reason on a different basis is simply nonsense.

Resemblance never affords any evidence of identity between things. The resemblances that are found in nature may be interesting, but they are hardly anything more. It is interesting to observe that throughout the whole vertebrate subkingdom of animals the vital organs are preserved and protected by a case or box formed, as in the

turtle, by the breast-bone below and the ribs and backbone united above. The plans in all cases seem very much like, and yet the theory is carried out very differently in each instance, as we see in the case of the bird, the whale, the ox, the dog.

Peculiarly interesting is the subject of metamorphosis, but how much real truth is there in the doctrine as it is received and understood among men? Is it a fact that one thing changes into another in any of the realms of nature? Is there any evidence that anything of that kind is to be seen or found anywhere in our experience? Does the bud become the blossom; does the tadpole become the frog; does the caterpillar become the butterfly; does the acorn become the oak; does the child become the man? There is plenty of room for discussion on this point.

It would seem that metamorphosis does not differ essentially from growth. Growth, ordinary growth, is itself the most marvelous phenomenon that nature affords. What is really more wonderful than that something that is an acorn to-day becomes an oak bearing new acorns later on? Is the change real or apparent? Does the acorn actually become the oak?

The better way would be to view the question in one of two lights: The bud, for example, becomes the flower simply because *it has been the flower all along*, and so it will continue to be to the end.

Or, as another view, when the flower appears, the bud disappears and is gone forever. In neither case is there any transformation of one thing into

another. Under the first view there is no death, but merely a continued being or becoming. In the second view, there is continued death, the old dying continually to give place to the new. Which view is to be preferred? As intimated, there is truth in both views. When we learn what time is, and what distance, size and motion are, we shall know something about growth, and not before.

In the case of the chick or the child, we have no question about continued existence. It is the same being, or the same creature, not only from birth, but even back of birth, to the time of conception. There is no question about the grain of wheat that is placed in the ground. Why should there be any question in the case of the tadpole, the caterpillar, or the larvae of insects generally? We should not be misled by changes of appearance. Appearance has nothing to do with reality. There are great changes in the form and appearance of the child, both before and after birth. The form of a being at any one time has absolutely nothing to do with its identity.

Why should we speak of transformation in any such connection? In the case of both the tadpole and the caterpillar, as in other cases, we know it is the same creature throughout its career. The frog is the tadpole, only a little older, and so it is with the butterfly and the caterpillar. But to go back to the other view of the question, is it a fact that the child and the old man are both living at one and the same time? Are the child and the man one being? It would seem to be impossible.

The child disappeared long since, and it will never appear again. What is the difference between such a case and death, so far as the child is concerned? Its reappearance in this world, as we know, is impossible.

THE HISTORY OF LAW

To understand what law really is, we must know its history and be able to trace its development from its beginning down to the present time. To understand and appreciate the features of any being, we must have seen and known this being throughout the whole of its worldly career. A man, for example, at five years or five months, is not a complete man; nor can the child be considered in any sense as a fully developed representative of the race. No more is he a complete man at forty, or seventy, or even ninety years; he is not at any one of these ages a fair representative of man in the abstract, or of man in fact. A man at forty is merely a man at one particular stage of life, and in himself, at that particular period of existence, he is far from being a complete man.

For the people of this country, who are largely the descendants of northern European stock, the history of law is presented in its best form in the history of the German races, especially as that history has been known and written for the past two thousand years. The whole of northern Europe is

by descent largely of German stock. The English were originally Saxons and Danes, a branch of the Germans, and that element of English character was never wholly eliminated. It disappeared, we know, but the process was one of amalgamation. The Normans, or northern French, conquered England nearly a thousand years ago, but they were never able to leave any very durable impression of their own upon the English character. It was the Normans who became English, rather than the reverse. And it may be observed that the original French were of a stock closely allied to the Germans, their nearest neighbors. However, the Romans held France longer, and they subjugated that country, known as Gaul, more thoroughly than they were ever able to do in England; and it is for that reason that the French are to-day a Latin people far more than German. It will be remembered that the French are uniformly Catholics, as the Spaniards and Italians also are, for a similar reason; while the German races, with less Latin influence, are uniformly Protestants.

We need hardly add that the Dutch are pure Germans, with some French blood, and the Danes, Norwegians and Swedes constitute another branch, the Gothic, of the same family. The Finns and the Magyars are closely allied with the Turkish race, as language clearly shows, these races being of Tartar or Asiatic origin. The Russians, Poles, Bohemians, Bulgarians and Servians constitute a distinct race by themselves, and are known as Slavs, or the Slavic people. Their language in

many respects resembles that of the Greeks, and the people themselves have many Greek features in their character and habits. Their religion is that of the Greek church, which differs very materially from the Latin church. The Russians, especially in the more modern city of St. Petersburg, have copied freely from the Greek models in their architecture, and many of the public buildings of that city are emphatically Greek in form and appearance to-day.

In the early centuries of the Christian era, the German race occupied substantially the same section of Europe that they hold to-day. They knew nothing of Christianity, and yet they could hardly be called Pagans. They had a religion of their own, and its doctrines, which were implanted in the hearts of their youth, controlled their everyday life. They believed in more than one God, or spirit, even as the Christians do at the present time, but they had no such mythology, and not a multiplicity of gods and goddesses, as the old Greeks and Romans had. They had no written laws; indeed, there was no lawmaking body among the old Germans. They had no Bible as we have. They had no schools, no education, as it is known to us to-day. They had teachings, sayings, proverbs, poems, precepts, tradition, custom, and these took the place of common law as it existed formerly, and as it still exists to-day to a certain extent, in England. Bodies met—assemblages of the people they were—at certain times, in the fields or in groves, and there the precepts and the doctrines of the country were applied, and thus differences

between individuals were peacefully settled and quickly adjusted.

The Germans had liberty as we do not have it at the present time—even in this boasted democracy of ours. The people then possessed all the rights and the power, and such an organization as a state or a government, if it existed at all, was only in embryo. Indeed, such an institution as a government, outside of and independent of the people, as we have it, and as others have it all over the civilized world to-day, was something entirely unknown to our ancestors, the brave and noble Germans. The ordinary free citizen, among the Germans, was not limited or circumscribed by any rule or obligation known as law. He was a free-born man, and as such he had all the power and privileges that belonged to a sovereign. He could do, and did do, as he pleased; and if in doing what he conceived to be right and proper, he offended some one, he was ready at all times to take the consequences as they came. He asked for no help from the state; indeed, as we have said, among the Germans, there was no state, no government, no laws, no king, no executioner. No such officer or organization or instrument was known or needed. The German warrior—and all the free men were warriors—was at all times abundantly able to take care of himself. But in extreme emergencies, as in the case of a feud, his whole family and kindred made common cause with him and gave him all the assistance and protection that he needed.

Here it must be observed that among the old Germans, as also in England of old, and in every

civilized land in the world, only a portion of the population were free men. The free men were the warriors; they bore arms at all times, and were prepared for battle when war came. The women and children remained at home and performed such labor as was required of them. They had no rights, they had no duties, beyond their labors. But there were real slaves beside—those who had been taken as prisoners in war, or who had lost their manhood in some other way. Generally, there were more slaves in the country than free men. This same state of affairs existed in Athens, a city that out of 400,000 inhabitants had only 20,000 free men, with the rights and privileges that belong to such men. It might be remarked that if the world had never had slaves, it would never have had laws, with the punishments, prisons and chains that laws always imply.

It is well known that punishments were instituted originally for slaves, being applied to them exclusively, and so it was with laws generally. Laws in the beginning were made for slaves; and in fact that is their character even at the present time. The free-born men of ancient times knew no laws, and they certainly recognized none. To have laws as we have them now—machine-made, ready-to-order, fitting everybody and everything, restraining citizens generally in their most humble avocations, is a *very recent innovation*. It is strictly modern. Nothing of the kind was known a hundred years ago. Nay, such laws as are now ground out by legislatures every year would have shocked and astounded people who lived no longer

than fifty years ago. Our state people, our office-holding contingent, have been so successful with their boss-made laws that they are using them now for *all sorts of schemes, and for every imaginable purpose.*

When money can be wrung so easily and so expeditiously from the people by simply holding an election or by having a law passed or a decree published, what wonder is it that we have statutes and orders so multifarious and so multitudinous as they are? And if people come to have, finally, a tyrant for a master, what difference does it make, so far as results are concerned, whether he happens to be an elective tyrant, or one who has gained the mastery by trickery and deceit, or possibly by force of arms? The effect that is felt by a subdued and oppressed race would be precisely the same in either case. In other words, the tyranny of a democratic form of government is just as oppressive as any other form. The best government after all is the one in which nobody governs and nobody is governed. No man should be held responsible for his conduct in any case, save when he is free to act and can do as he pleases. If the government makes a business of constraining its citizens, it ought to assume the whole responsibility for the trouble that ensues.

THE OLD GERMANS

The old Germans were an agricultural people, but their main occupation, at least in peace times, was caring for herds and flocks. They raised crops

on a small scale, but their farming was primitive in character and limited in quantity, compared with what it is at the present day. They lived mostly in small villages, or on scattered homesteads. Cities were not known among the old Germans until long after the invasion by the Romans. The people were uncorrupted either by trade or commerce, being in this respect very much in the condition of the Chinese. They knew little of strangers. Indeed, they were always shy of foreigners, and they were always careful to keep them at arms length. No settler was ever admitted in their midst as a settler unless he was vouched for by some German citizen. Strangers were given no rights or privileges, and they could not settle down in any place without receiving special permission. The blunder that we are constantly making—receiving strangers daily without a certificate or guarantee of any kind—was not made by the Germans nor by any other civilized people in those days. Strangers—rascals or enemies frequently—were everywhere received with due caution, when they were received at all.

And now we come to an important question: How came the Germans to cease to be free men and to have laws to bind, hamper and oppress them, as all civilized nations have at the present day? The transition from freedom to slavery has been the same substantially all over the world—it is all done insidiously, by slow degrees and subtle processes. *It comes always from the stupidity, indolence or willfulness of the slaves themselves.* Liberty is not taken away—such a thing is impossible. *It is given*

away—always given away! a little to-day and more to-morrow, yielding in this place now and in that place afterward, till the birthright is entirely lost and all has disappeared! That is how such a result has arisen, and how it always will arise. We are doing the same thing and following the same trend in America to-day. We are making rapid strides toward despotism on one side and slavery on the other, and we are getting visibly nearer and nearer our destination every day. By and by we shall find that everything is gone, and soon there will be only one alternative left—Revolution! That always follows—*it surely comes at last*. We can do nothing, it seems finally, without war and bloodshed. Strange, is it not? What real remedy is there ever to be found in bloodshed? New masters is all that we obtain.

The Germans, in the course of time, began to do as we are doing. They developed trade, money-lending and commerce. They eventually became rich, and naturally enough, they wanted to become richer. They had bosses and employees. They admitted strangers and extended business. They had clients and patrons, and from these they drew constantly increasing revenues. They had learned the interesting trick of making money by profits and per cents. In their political development, they were at first contented with dukes or leaders, but later on they found that kings were more desirable. As their wealth increased, their cities and towns grew larger and more populous. To defend their wealth, an army was needed, and this implies always an enormous annual expenditure.

Of course with such a state of things as we have just set forth, the Germans found that laws and ordinances were necessary, for without laws such institutions as we have mentioned could not be maintained. When laws were called for, they were readily obtained. Laws always come easy—they are such simple, harmless things! However, when laws come, they always stay, and they bring other laws with them when they arrive. Indeed, there is no end to law-making, when the business once fairly opens. In Germany, the cities made laws, the barons or lords made laws, the societies or guilds made laws, the church or the bishop made laws, and the king and his agents made laws. The Germans now, like other peoples, are burdened with so many laws and decrees that they have no rights remaining, and no things which they can properly call their own. The free-born Germans of old, noble people as they were, have long since disappeared, and a race of slaves are to-day toiling in their stead. That is what has come from the making of many laws. Laws are never able to make things right. They really have nothing to do with right, and those who shape them have no concern about either the rights or the wrongs of mankind. Laws are merely contrivances with which men—often very bad men—are able to accomplish their iniquitous designs. What follows laws in all cases is *taxes* and *tribute*. Indeed, it is to ensure the taxes and tribute, chiefly, that laws are made in the first place.

But without dwelling farther upon the laws and government of the Germans of the present

time, let us not forget that for long centuries their ancestors set an example that it would have been well for the remaining races of Europe to have followed. Rome gave to the world law, but liberty in the proper sense of the term is something that its citizens never received from those who controlled the destinies of that proud capital. Athens talked freely and loudly of liberty, but it was liberty in name only, liberty of the city, and not of the citizen. It was reserved for the Germans of the earlier centuries to accord liberty to all free men, without regard to rank, property, or party. History gives us no record of any progressive people that ever gave liberty for any length of time to the *individual* as was done by the Germans of olden times.

A LESSON FROM HISTORY

Before Rome was founded, seven hundred and fifty years before Christ, there were no cities and large towns in Europe, except possibly a few on the shores of the Mediterranean. There were clan villages, or small towns, in the mountain districts of Italy, as there were in other countries of Europe, farther north, but they were all small establishments, compared with Rome or with cities of the present day. The name given by the Latins to a city was *urbs*, a form of the word *orbis*, an orb or circle—so called because the town was sur-

rounded by a circular wall, for protection against enemies. A small town was called *oppidum*, from *opus*, a work. It was really a fortified place, such as all towns were in the Middle Ages, and even at an earlier date. In fact a city or town in its origin was simply a fortress. The people selected some elevated or inaccessible spot, and they proceeded to erect a strong wall as an enclosure. In times of peace and when no danger was apprehended, the people attended to their labors on the outside, cultivating their fields, caring for their flocks, or gathering in their harvest. When the enemy threatened them, they quickly ran to the city, or castle, and took refuge within the fortifications. Such, we repeat, was the original purpose of every old city or town in Europe. Inside the walls, the most conspicuous object and most important structure was always the church or temple. The people of those days really believed in the power of God, or the gods, and they felt that it would be impossible to get along without the daily assistance of these beings. Of course there were many other buildings inside the walls besides the church. All the stores and all valuable property that was movable were brought in as a measure of security.

Rome at first, like all the neighboring towns and tribes, was isolated and independent. It had gods of its own, as its neighbors had, and for a time it was peaceful and contented. There was plenty of its own work to be done so long as the city felt inclined to give it the attention that was due. But eventually it became strong, and with strength, as often happens in such cases, pride and

ambition began to develop. Instead of following the straight and narrow way as other towns had previously done, Rome seems to have preferred the highwayman's career for its model, and this route it pursued boldly and persistently to the end. Let us see the results that followed the career thus chosen, which will appear some time later on.

The Greeks and Romans were neighboring peoples, only a comparatively narrow strip of water, a day's journey by sea, separating the two countries. Greece was older than Rome and had made considerable progress, in arts, science and culture, before Rome had even become known. The policy of Greece was always different from that pursued in later times by Rome. Greece was small in extent; the country was rocky, the soil unproductive, and the revenues at the end of the year were by no means considerable. It might have made conquests and founded an empire, but such never was its settled ambition, except in the case of the Macedonians. But Rome, as we have intimated already, had a different policy in view and it took a different direction at the outset of its career. This city began with a comparatively free government at home, a sort of democracy in which the rights of the people were fully recognized. However, Rome always had a strong government, the result of thorough organization and complete centralization of power. The people had a voice in public affairs, but they had little beyond a voice. The power was always vested in the head, wherever that might be, and the masses

uniformly found it either necessary or prudent to submit. The Romans believed in gods and religion, and that always implies ready submission to the constituted authorities—sometimes to the priest, sometimes to the commander of armies, and sometimes to the king.

Rome began its conquests quite early in its history. It gained strength with wonderful rapidity; its people were always brave, persistent and aggressive, and no matter what resistance was encountered, it was either promptly removed or speedily overcome. Rome always possessed strong and able men at the head of her affairs, and these men were very careful to keep the reins of government well in hand. They were strong men who led Rome on from small beginnings at first to great conquests in the end. It was strong men that gave to Rome its wonderful history. Strong men founded the empire; they urged Rome onward and upward to the very acme of its greatness. But beyond that, it must be remembered, there came ruin and overthrow at last.

The Romans found little time to devote to either art, literature, philosophy or science. What Rome needed in these departments was mostly bought, borrowed or copied, with some slight changes, of course—generally from Greece, but often from the East. The Romans had no great interest in studies of any kind; their minds were centered upon conquest, with government, law and politics following naturally in its train. In these departments, and in these alone, Rome for centuries stood pre-eminent. In her conquests, she

began with the peoples of Italy—the Etruscans, the Sabines, the Samnites. These races, after long and sanguinary conflicts, were at last brought under complete subjugation, and henceforth Rome and Italy had a common destiny. The conquest of Greece and Macedonia followed in due time; Asia Minor, Egypt and Carthage also; and finally Spain and Gaul. These conquests had all been accomplished shortly before the birth of Christ—perhaps fifty or a hundred years before. And what was there left to conquer? Of the civilized world, practically nothing! Rome was complete master at last—and what followed? We shall soon see.

The chief study and effort of Rome from the beginning onward was in the direction of centralization, and the means and energies of the city were constantly devoted to that one object, to the neglect and exclusion of all others. This much desired concentration of power was finally effected, but at what a fearful cost, with what a prodigality of expenditure, and withal with what a frightful sacrifice of human life! Victories bring power, momentary power, but in their wake, a host of evils and the severest afflictions are sure to follow. Napoleon gained victory after victory; he even invaded Russia and entered the proud capital of that great country, followed as he was by the remnant of his grand army of five hundred thousand men. But conqueror as he seemed, his cause was already lost. His very victories had brought him nothing but ruin at last, as victories uniformly do in similar cases. His armies had been wasted and his resources were exhausted.

France herself saw nothing ahead but danger of defeat, and it was only a short time comparatively ere she found herself helpless in the hands of her enemies. Just so Rome won the battle of Zama, and Carthage lay prostrate under the heel of the conqueror. But the rejoicings of victorious Rome were of short duration, and doubt and despair soon followed. The battle of Zama proved to be the last grand effort that Rome was ever able to make, and from that time forward her decline was speedy and inevitable. As a city and a government her disease was fatal, and though she lingered long in helplessness and decay, there was no question among observing men about the certainty of her ultimate collapse and final overthrow. For Rome as a power among nations, her sun had set forever.

While Rome was fighting her enemies abroad,—in Spain, in Carthage, in Gaul, in Greece, in Egypt, in Asia Minor—she was neglecting and disregarding her enemies at home. Agriculture, which had long been the chief support of this famous city, was now almost wholly abandoned by the original farmers and settlers, because they had come to look upon farm labor as low and vulgar, and they considered a city life far more desirable. What little work was performed in the country was done by a degraded and indolent order of people who knew little about the business before them and who cared less. Farm buildings fell into everlasting decay, and even the fertile fields were not cultivated. Large sections of land were bought by the rich at a trifling price; and

these were at once converted into ranches for cattle, sheep and swine, a form of expenditure that brought to the investor steady returns, at large per cents on the money invested, and with very little trouble or labor on his part.

Corruption and venality prevailed everywhere, and the sturdy Roman character of old had long since disappeared, being replaced as it was by something supposed to be more cultured and more refined, but, as it proved, really by something more debased and corruptible. The rich took advantage of the opportunities offered to them by the times and the occasion, and thus they became daily richer and richer; while the poorer classes, left helpless and without resources, sank lower and lower in the depths of poverty and distress with every change that appeared in the government. Moreover, why should the masses labor, when they were fed freely at the public tables, and they had nothing to do but to present themselves and partake of what was set before them, when meal time arrived?

The conquered East sent her full quota of luxuries, introducing her foul arts and thus adding her share toward helping along the wave of corruption and immorality that was sweeping over the empire. Then, unwittingly no doubt, the slave population contributed greatly toward the final downfall of the Roman people. Slavery is at all times vicious in character and debilitating in its influences; and in this case Rome certainly proved to be no exception to the rule. Slaves had become more numerous than free men, and to labor at any

employment was considered beneath the dignity of any free-born man or woman. The agencies that are sure at last to bring ruin upon any civilized country are these: Religion, Centralized Power, Increasing Wealth, Thirst for Conquest, and Slavery—Slavery, no doubt, more than all the other agencies combined.

What do the American people see in this picture that reminds them of their own country? Rome lasted, in one form or other, for many hundred years. Will our American government, organized as it is, endure so long, and will our people maintain their unity and strength for any such length of time as was noticed in the case of Rome? *Most assuredly they will not.* With our railroads and steamships at command, and with gunpowder, dynamite, electricity and the press always ready to do our bidding, civilization now hastens forward in its course at a much more rapid pace than was ever witnessed in the days of ancient Rome.

THE PROGRESS OF CIVILIZATION

So far as history gives us any information, all the accurate and specific knowledge of civilization that we possess is confined to that form or development which first manifested itself on or near the shores of the Mediterranean. There was a civilization before that, and perhaps better than that, which had its origin and center in India, or

perhaps in China. It had a remarkable influence upon the history of the world, but as a matter of record we know but little of its growth and character. We have some evidence, but we lack many documents to enable us to make a complete and satisfactory history of this eastern philosophy. What concerns us chiefly now is modern civilization, and to that we shall confine our attention.

The history of any country, like the history of every individual, depends chiefly upon its location and surroundings. If any particular people, no matter who they were or whence they came, had settled down in a country situated as Russia is, some centuries ago, they would have had, no doubt, a history and a lack of development similar in all respects to that of the Russians with whom we are acquainted to-day. No people dwelling inland can have the expansion and make that progress which is uniformly made by a maritime people. All peoples advance according to what they learn, and they learn solely through those with whom they come in direct contact, or to whom they happen to be contiguous. A nation without neighbors, without contact, without friction, without emulation, or even without conflict at times, has never been known to make any material advancement in science, art or morals. If Spain, Italy and Greece had not been peninsulas, as India is, how could they have made that progress and had that history that has rendered them famous?

To make progress possible in civilization, there must be quick, easy and regular means of communication between neighboring peoples. This

is what the Mediterranean Sea afforded to Greece, and thus her development in civilization was rendered possible. Even the interior of Spain was far behind the coast regions of that country, and the same was true of Italy and Greece. On the sea-shore we uniformly find cultivated and progressive races, while those in the interior upland or mountain districts are always non-progressive, and in a measure lacking in culture and refinement.

If we go back in history, we shall find that India taught Persia, and perhaps Thibet and China. Persia again carried its knowledge and acquirements to the fertile valley lying between the Euphrates and the Tigris, and Babylon and Nineveh arose. These great cities extended their influence to Syria and the shores of the eastern Mediterranean. Syria again made conquests in Egypt; hordes came also from Arabia, and the land of the Pharaohs was overwhelmed. Then a new civilization began, and Egypt became the acknowledged center both of science and religion, as well as of philosophy. In this country, Greece learned her first lessons, and here she received her inspiration.

In Greece there now began a different civilization, and later on Rome arose. Finally, gunpowder was discovered and steam began to come into general use. The printing press was discovered and people began to read and think who had never read or thought before. Railroads were eventually built and inland towns had means of communication given them that before had been confined to seaport towns. Northern Europe, and

even northern Asia, that had been lost in darkness up to this period, now began to awaken and advance, and thus, like the rising sun, new worlds began to appear.

DEATH

Death is a little thing, or it would be if we did not magnify it in our minds and transform it at last into a dreadful spectre. Deaths occur daily, the young and the old, the great and the obscure, all alike die in their time, and yet the world goes on very much as usual. Numbers make no difference, quality or standing makes no difference with results in this case. And really what difference does it make with the survivors when it is that people die, or who it is or how many? The world always goes on precisely as if nothing had happened. Nothing really has been lost. The ocean may be shaken up, and for a time it may assume frightful shapes—but after all it remains the same old ocean still. The sun comes out finally, the clouds disappear, and everything goes on again peacefully and quietly as it did the day before.

There is no evidence that anything is actually lost, or can be lost, through death in this world. Things are not really lost to us, because they never were ours. No man can lose what he never owned. We may not have the dollar that we had, but some one else has it. What is a loss for one is

always a gain for others; and very frequently we ascertain that what appeared to us at first to be a misfortune proved at last to be a gain.

From another standpoint, the world never actually dispenses with us. Because we do not exist in our original form, it does not by any means follow that we do not exist in some other form. We may change our form, our time, our place, and yet it does not follow that we have been annihilated. The thought of annihilation is abhorrent to man, and it is impossible. We may disappear, and still remain. The whole source of error in this case lies in the fact that we confound the body with the man himself. We might as well confound him with his picture, his shadow, or even with his coat or hat. Many things have many forms. Words have many forms, many applications; living beings have many forms, many relations. Why not man also? Nature busies itself with things, while man concerns himself only with the forms and appearance of things. Nature seems to pay but slight regard to the forms of things.

CONCLUSION

There is very little to say in conclusion, save that the author has done his work, and done it faithfully and conscientiously. The book is the result of much study and reflection, and is the product, in the aggregate, of a large amount of labor. It is not simply what is found in the book that is to be considered, but the persistent study, the inquiry and effort that enables a writer in all cases to distinguish fact from fiction. To know, a man must first learn; a man's acquirements are measured largely by what he has learned before he reads. People who come in from the farms and business places are not presumed to understand a subject quite as well as one who has devoted a life-time to its study.

It is hardly necessary to add that this work is in the fullest sense original—as much so at least as productions are usually. It has always been the writer's aim to print and publish simply his own thoughts, leaving others to do the same thing with their thoughts when ready for the press. There are indeed many valuable books that he has read, more or less fully. He has found in them de-

sirable information and welcome suggestions; they have indicated to him the progress and the status of the science in which he is interested. Above all, he has often felt himself strengthened and encouraged by finding his own views accepted and defended by eminent writers who had written before him and touched upon the same subjects. But new thoughts were never sought by him in the books of other men—if for no other reason, for this, that no one can understand and appreciate the thoughts of another man until they have become his own.

The writer cannot say that he sees any encouragement for the publication of such a work as this, at this time, in this country. It takes something more than a sound and well-written work to make a popular and acceptable book among the people. The success of a book depends fully as much upon the knowledge, feelings and temperament of the people as it does upon the merits of the work itself. It all depends at last upon what the people are thinking about, and what they are delighted to think about. The writer very well knows that the masses of this country are not seriously concerned, nor even greatly interested, in such studies, of a social and political character, as have engaged his attention for over fifty years.

The time has not yet come for any one to be able to arouse the people, or to give to their thoughts a new and more rational direction. Will it ever come? It is very hard to instruct people who have no questions to ask, especially on such subjects as these. How many valuable books, on topics of this character, have been written and published in this country, within the last twenty-five years, by authors whose names to-day are not even known or mentioned! It is not the writer's fault, but the fault of the people, in most instances.

But why complain? Has not the fate of new thought always been such as we have just noticed? Has it not always been the people's practice to stone their prophets? They do not themselves care to think and study, and when they get a new idea, outside of their ordinary avocations, they obtain it usually from those self-sacrificing individuals who make a business of studying important questions. A few men have always done the thinking for the world, and doubtless a few men will continue to do that work for some time to come. But what office could be more thankless than this? A barber or a tinker—a good barber or a good tinker—always fares better than a man who has nothing to offer the public but “new ideas.” Barbers and tinkers can serve the public, they can furnish something that is really wanted. But, in this country, is there any demand for new

ideas, especially on social, scientific and political topics? Who cares about truth just now, when fiction is so much more entertaining and answers its purpose in a manner which is so much more satisfactory? Who has time or inclination to devote to subjects so uninteresting as these? Is there anybody who is fond of study, either as a task or a pastime?

There is another obstacle that authors are sure to encounter in their journey through life—a total lack of sympathy and friendship among such men as a body. It is perhaps the only craft in which no bond of union exists between its members—no cohesion, no affinity of any kind. Read the lives of authors who follow writing as a business, and observe their fate. And yet it must be remembered that authors, sometimes hostile and often indifferent, have very much to do with the making of reputations for other authors. Publishers never quote what John Doe says of their books, no matter how wise he may be nor how great his attainments. They prefer to copy the recommendations of some noted writer, some eminent statesman or some popular journalist, though he may know little or nothing of the subject in question. This is a sample of the deference that we are accustomed to pay to authority.

In America, writing books, like every other occupation, is strikingly a business matter. Very

few devote themselves to study for the satisfaction that it affords, and still smaller is the number of those who study for diversion. Profound thinking is rare, probably on account of its exhausting effect upon the mind. Indeed, there does not seem to be any great claim for eminence in literature anywhere in this country just now. We may do better later on. There is plenty of talent, but it is rarely applied in this direction. Our reputation abroad is not very flattering, but possibly we do not get all the credit that we deserve.

Even in Germany, the home of profound thought, matters seem to have been rather quiet for a long time, especially in the domain of metaphysics. Kant seems to have exhausted the subject of philosophy, in the early part of the nineteenth century, and since then very little appears to have been done, in that direction, beyond copying and commenting upon the works of that remarkable author. Very few, comparatively, were able to read his works understandingly; and even translations did not seem to improve matters materially. However, the people believed in him chiefly because of the abstruseness and incomprehensibleness of what he wrote. They believe in this philosopher still, and thus it is that he is left in possession of the field. There never has been a case quite like it, either before his day or since. But it may be observed that belief comes not only

from knowledge but also from the want of it. It is a well known fact that men are found to put most trust in agencies with which they have little or no acquaintance. In the words of Buckle, "We wonder because we are ignorant, and we fear because we are weak."

Just now, it may be added, the works of Prof. Rudolph Eucken, of the University of Jena, an author noted alike for his learning and genius, are attracting world-wide attention. He has a lively and perspicuous style, and his works are printed in large type, on excellent paper. How far the literary world can be aroused by the writings of any author, on questions of philosophy, at this time, is something that remains to be seen. Prof. Eucken's distinguished efforts are certainly in the right direction. In 1908 this gentleman was honored with the Nobel prize in Literature.

No doubt, it may be added finally, there is plenty of room to question whether the writer of this work has taken the wrong view or the right view of the subjects that he has chosen for consideration. But that is wholly a matter of opinion. Like all other questions that come up for decision, the verdict depends very much upon what the court happens to think and how it feels. However, there can be no doubt about this fact, that all the questions presented in this book are *great questions*. What is true, or what is truth, is a

great question; the questions of God, worship, sacrifice, are all great questions; so is education a great question, and marriage, love, pity, giving, charity are great questions. Government presents a great question, and law, evidence, courts, punishment, taxes, protection, are all matters of the highest concern to mankind. To decide whether this is a good world or a bad world that we live in, is to all a matter of the utmost importance. It is a great question for us to consider whether we do or do not always see things as they are. Or is it a fact that we have merely opinions of things in all cases?

Nothing is so important to man as the belief that he forms; and whether he has true conceptions or false conceptions of things, is a question which must affect seriously his whole earthly career. It was Malebranche, a French philosopher, who said this: "*Error is the cause of the misery of men; it is this bad principle that has brought evil into the world.*" He lived and wrote two hundred and fifty years ago, and still there are few in this country who know anything about his teachings. Even those who are acquainted with his writings have found little in his doctrines to interest them.

It is evident enough that people are slow to accept what they read, especially if the teachings happen to be sound and the statements reliable. Ordinarily, what appears to be most absurd and

most mysterious is accepted most readily. Popularity in books, like popularity in other departments, is largely a manufactured article. Something must be done to interest the public; above all, there must be liberal and persistent advertising. Books are wares, just like other wares. Generally, people buy them because others buy them, and that is the reason why so few books are read. But to many of the old school, advertising books is quite distasteful. It reminds one of a practice common enough in some countries, of hiring parties to sing the praises of the deceased and weep over his departure.

Those who wish to pursue the inquiries of this work farther might consult *Life without a Master*, *The New Dispensation*, and *Living Thoughts*. These volumes, with the present, contain the author's Views of Life, or his Philosophy of Living, given in all cases truthfully and without mental reservation.

J. WILSON.

Newark, N. Y.

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